OR,

[S]equestred Divine

HIS

APHORISMS,

OR,

BREVIATS

of Speculations.

IN TWO CENTURIES.

By *Theophilus Wodenote*, *B. D.* sometimes fellow of Kings College in Cambridge.

Cantic. chap. 4. ver. 16.

Awake, O Northwinde, and come thou South, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.

LONDON,

Printed by *T. W.* for *Andrew C[illegible]*, at the *Green Dragon*, in *S. Paul's* Church-yard, 16[illegible]

John McLean

1809.

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TO THE

HIGHLY BORN,

HONORABLY MINDED,

AND

WORTHY OF HONORABLE

AND HIGH RESPECT,

MATTHEW HALSE

of Efford *in the County of*

Devon *Esquire*,

THEOPHILUS WODENOTE

one of his obliged Oratours dedicates

these his *Aphorisms*, or *Breviats* of *Speculation*;

And daily beseecheth God for him, that both he, and all his issue, so specious already by affinitie with so many Noble Progenies, and still growing more and more eminent by their own sincere and abundant piety and charity, may by divine mercy be preserved, thorough faith, unto salvation.

APHORISMS, OR, BREVIATS of Speculations.

The first Centurie.

I.

BEfore, and after, and in all businesses, and at all times, remember Prayer: how canst thou hope to speed in any thing thou do'st, if thou do'st it not in Gods fear, and with his favour, which is the very soule of thy soule, and life of thy life, so profitable, so necessary, that by it thy soules sal-

vation; and life it self liveth? Let not thy unworthiness deterr thee, though thou art subject to many passions, and canst not pray as thou oughtest; *Elias* was subject to the like, and yet prayed, and was heard (*a*). Upon a crie made the thief seeks to flie, and neighbours come to help: upon a prayer made, the Devill shifts away, and God comes to succour.

(*a*) James 5. 17, 18.

2.

IN petitioning Almighty God, *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek & yee shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you* (*b*); Not alone ask, and it shall be given you, ther's not a full point; but seek, and knock, as well as ask; our Saviour useth a threefold phrase, and urgeth the duty from one degree to another, with interposition of proportionable promises, to signifie, that we must pray often, be earnest, and zealous, for cold suters proove cold speeders. Cold and superficial requests can never pierce the clouds, nor find any manner of access to the Throne of Grace.

(*b*) Matth. 7. 17.

The

The prayer of the righteous availeth much, but with this condition, if it be fervent (*c*); but put not ferventneſs in copiouſneſs of ſyllables, but of ſenſe, not in lip-labour, but in heart-labour; God eſteemeth not the loudneſs, or the length, but the ſtrength of prayer, nor weighes he the ready words, but the radicall devotion of him that praeth; Thou mayeſt pray, and cry, and outcrie others, even without crying out: *Moſes* prayer could not be heard on earth, (*d*) and yet the cry of it came up to heaven: when the tongue cannot ſpeak to God, if with heart we can ſigh to him, he underſtandeth that language, and we ſhall be ſure of help; A ſigh ſometimes will ſerve, if truly from the ſoul.

[*c*] James 5. 16.

[*d*] Exod. 14. 15.

3.

TRuſt not with the Papiſts, to ſcale the high fort of Heaven, by the broken, and rotten ladder of the merits of Saints, or thy own works or worthyneſs; but place all thy hopes, and moove all thy ſutes, in

in the Name of Jesus Christ, without whom neither thou, nor any of the Saints, have any thing to do with God; but pray God for thy right in Jesus Christ, not to enter into judgment with thee; but claime all thy right to blessednes by thy right in Jesus Christ; without whom no man hath right in any thing, saving in Gods indignation, and his own destruction.

4.

PRay that thy faith may be scientious and unfeigned; that thy life may be conscientious and unspotted; Mans life and religion are for the most part like; A sound faith, a sweet behaviour; A false faith, a debauched demeanour; The fountaine being fowle and noysome, can the water be faire and wholesome? Can a bad tree bring forth good fruit? Do men gather grapes of thornes, or figs of thistles (e)? Neither can their outward conversation be pure, whose inward perswasion is not perfect.

[e] Matth. 7. 16.

5.

5.

WHat books ſoever other men admire and make their Jewels, Let the Scriptures be dearer unto thee, than all other books together: Let them be a lampe to thy feet, and a light unto thy paths (ſ). Set and ſettle thy continuall conſidera- [ſ] Pſal. 119. 105.
tions upon them: Wherein nothing is ſuperfluous, nor any thing wanting; wherein, whatſoever is taught, is truth, whatſoever is commanded is goodneſs, whatſoever is promiſed is perfect happineſs; yea, which not onely for pure and perfect matter, but for high and heavenly expreſſions, ſo farr excell, that they are not to be mentioned with any other writings by way of compariſon.

6.

HOw ragged are mens expreſſions? How poor the pithineſs of their diſcourſes? In ſight of the ſacred Scriptures, their moſt accompliſhed Treatiſes are not ſo much as the light

light of a candle, to the glorious brightneſs of the Sun in his chiefeſt ſplendour: In Gods book every partic e hath his poize, every tittle is uſefull; every ſyllable is ſententious; every word is wonderfull; He that once truly knows it, cannot chuſe but love it; He that truly loves it, cannot chuſe but with all the veines of his heart commend it to others.

7.

TAke not upon thee to juſtify whatſoever any the moſt learned men without ſpeciall inſpiration hath publiſhed; but whatſoever any pen-man of Scripture, to whom the Holy Ghoſt did dictate, hath ſet down, defend to thy death, and with thy death; Men may erre not knowing the Scriptures (*g*); not attaining to the perfect ſenſe of them; *Apollo* a learned Doctour, fervent in the Spirit, and mighty in the Scriptures, yet was he ignorant in divers things, and received inſtruction from *Aquila* and *Priſcilla* (*b*). We know in part, and we prophe-

[*g*] Matth. 22. 29.

[*b*] Acts 18. 26.

ſy

ſy in part ſaid *S. Paul* (*i*), after long ſtudy, and many wonderfull revelations; after God had exalted him to the third heaven, and there ſhewed him more than a man might conceive. In ſundry things, as men, we are many times much miſtaken; but not a word in all the ſacred volumes, that can be either falſe, or faulty, the Scriptures of God cannot erre.

[i] 1 Cor. 13. 9.

8.

TAke not advantages, but advertiſements by Scripture; read it not to feed a faction, but to find a truth; look both forward and backward, and diligently ponder the circumſtances, that thou mayeſt the more clearely perceive the ſubſtance; catch not at the words, or phraſes, but conſider what the will of the Lord is; Think not, when Chriſt ſaith, that all that ever came before him were thieves & robbers (*k*), that therefore *Moſes*, *Elias*, *Eliſha*, *Iſaiah*, *Jeremiah*, and the reſt of the Prophets, were no better than thieves and robbers; becauſe they went before

[k] John. 10. 8.

fore Christ in time; but that such only were thieves, as professed themselves to be the door of the sheep, or received, or shewed any other than Christ himself; think not when *Saint Paul* said, that he was made all things to all men (*l*), that therefore he did at his pleasure that which God had directly forbidden to be done, that therefore he did make himself a libertine, or establish libertinism, or purchase a protection for every man to do what seemeth good in his own eyes; but that in matters free and indifferent, and undetermined, which were not repugnant to the Word, which were neither forbidden, nor commanded by God, such as may indifferently be either used, or not used, with a good conscience; according as the rules of godly discretion, circumstances duely considered, shall direct: he, without hurting the faith, or offending the righteous, changed himself into all fashions, and applyed himself to the conditions of all, that by all means hee might save some.

(*l*) 1 Cor. 9. 22.

9.

9.

FRom particular privileges in Scripture, appointed by Almighty God for some singular choice purposes, as from the *Israelites* spoiling the *Ægyptians* of their Jewels (*m*), or *Samsons* pulling down the house upon himself and others (*n*), as from *Elias* his calling of fire from heaven (*o*), or *Elisha* his cursing the children (*p*), or the like, collect not generall precepts, or perpetuall directions for the Church; extraordinary facts are no ordinary rules; every example is not a Law to bind every man to equall practice; thy argument taken from example is naught, unless thy warrant be alike good.

[m] Exod. 12. 36.
[n] Judg. 16. 30.
[o] 2 Kings 1. 10.
[p] 2 Kings 2. 24.

10.

SUch allegories, as thou findest expounded in the holy Scriptures, imbrace, as rules of Gods worship, matters of faith, and parts of religion, necessary to salvation; but such as mens severall devices frame

out

out of them, and commend to the world as hidden senses newly found out, neither believe them, nor desire to know them; but leave them to such as love a hidden divinity, and a secret religion devised in their own conceits, which will not abide the triall of the light; such pleasing various fancies, without sacred evidence of Gods certaine approbation, are but plausible allusions, and no probative allegations, can never work in the heart a full Theologicall perswasion. Conceive not with some passionate Papists, in the heat of their disputations, that Gods Word is a potentiall onely, no active rule; that the Scriptures are not authenticall without the authority of the Church; that the authority of the Scriptures dependeth upon the authority of the Church necessarily; Not go for advice to the Church necessarily, but to the Law and to the testimony saith the Prophet *Isaiah* (*q*), at that least examin and try the truth; Not what saith the Church? but what is written in the Law? how readest thou? saith our

[q] Isaiah 8. 20.

Saviour

Saviour (r). Not the Church but the Scripture is the ſole and ſupreme Judge of all queſtions and Controverſies of religion; The Church cannot give thee faith whereby thou believeſt in Chriſt, and layeſt hold of eternall life, It is the Scripture that worketh it by the inſpiration of the holy Spirit; Thou mayeſt ſet the diall by the Sun, Thou canſt not ſet the Sun by the diall; Thou mayeſt appeal from the judgment of the Church to the Scriptures, Not from the Scriptures to the Church.

[r] Luke 10. 26.

12.

As the wiſemen ſtretched not their courſe beyond the direction of the ſtar (ſ), ſo wander not thou in thy diſcourſe, beyond the direction of the word; ſo much knowledge of divine myſteries, as God hath revealed in his ſacred volumes, content thy ſelf with, and offer not thy ſelf to prie any further into them. Be ſure thou make a reſting place where God hath placed a full point; reſigne thy ſelf up to his wiſedom,

[ſ] Matth. 2. 9, 10, 11.

wisedom; adore his Counsels, and be not overcurious in any of his doings, Neither suffer any, within thy walk and power, to make any superfluous questions about them; If any do out of infidelity, or too much curiosity, Answer him briefly with that holy and judicious Father *Saint Austin*, (than whom few could better resolve doubts) Do thou dispute it, I will believe it; Do thou reason it, I will admire it (*t*); and rather seriously adore the worker, than curiously inquire the manner.

[*t*] *Tu disputa, ego credam, tu ratiocinare ego mirabor.*

13.

GIve free eares of body, and full regard of mind to whatsoever God speaketh in a plain form, and frame of words; but give an excellent heedfulnes to the Lord, where he useth a singular manner of speaking; There conceive some speciall thing is to be marked; there think thou art called to that speciall parenthesis of our Saviour, who so readeth let him understand (*u*); where the Lord speaketh strictly and artificially

[*u*] Matth. 24. 15.

artificially, be ſure to add to thy accuſtomed diligence a ſtrict and artificiall diligence, ſet thy attention where he ſetteth his words.

14.

WHatſoever ſcriptures thou readeſt or heareſt, attend them carefully, and apply them uſefully ſome way or other unto thy ſelf; for whatſoever was written afore time, was written (not at all adventures, or as hiſtories, to heare, or read for pleaſure, but) for our learning, that we thorough patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope (*w*). What ſhall a ſalve do, be it never ſo ſoveraigne, if it be not layd to the ſore? or what can the medicine availe, if it be not applyed to the diſeaſe? We do not find it written of *David* in particular; that he ſhould do the will of God, and yet in the volume of the book it is written of me, ſaith he, that I ſhould do thy will, O God I am content to do it (*x*); and yet he applies it in particular to himſelf, as if it had been ſpoken to him by name.

[*w*] Rom. 15. 4.

[*x*] Pſal. 40. 7.

15.

BE not like those bare-tonguy Christians in these dayes, whose mouths are full of religion, but their hearts altogether empty; who shew their faith by words, not by works; who think to be perfectly trusted for their pure talking. Ty not Gods Word to thy tongue, but bind it to thy fingers; not onely profess it with thy lips, but express it also, yea chiefly, in thy life: write it not in a scroul, as the *Romanists* do *Saint John's Gospell*, tying it about their necks for externall preservation, or (as the *Pharisees* did the Decalogue between their browes,) for externall signe of holiness; but write it in the table of thine heart, that thou mayest the better remember to put it in practise.

16.

TO Countenance sin allege not examples, hope not to stand upon the fall of others; conclude not

not thy ſelf ſafe, if thou canſt produce ſome holy men that have gon before thee in the ſame ſins; we may not imitate the vices but the vertues of good men; ſanctity goes not by preſidents but by precepts; we are not to live by examples, but by the Word, whereby our actions muſt be guided as by a rule, and by no example without it: Examples in Scripture are not all written for our imitation, that we may learne what to do; but a great number of them for our admonition, that we may know what to ſhun.

17.

WHom thou now truly believeſt to be inviſible, and immortall and incomprehenſible, Think not at any time that God is in earneſt like one of us, or that God hath a body, becauſe the Scriptures ſometimes give him our parts, becauſe we read of the heart of God, eyes, ears, arms, hands, feet, and ſuch like; for the holy pen-men, by the direction of the Spirit, expreſs

now and then the things of God by the phraſes of men, for mens better apprehenſion, and readyer underſtanding; becauſe we cannot underſtand how one ſhould ſee without eyes, or heare without eares, or ſhew ſtrength without armes. I ſpeak after the manner of men, ſaith Saint *Paul*, becauſe of the infirmity of your fleſh (*y*), I ſpeak as men commonly uſe, in regard of your weak capacities, and carnall imaginations: taking the beſt way to be underſtood, to inſtruct your ſouls, and affect your hearts. Come not to the hearing, or reading of ſuch ſpeeches, as the *Corinthians* came together, not for the better, but for the worſe (*z*); gather not the more errour from them, but the more knowledge: Hear them, or read them, to that end, for which they were written, even for thy clearer conception, and eaſier perſwaſion.

[*y*] Rom. 6. 19.

[*z*] 1 Cor. 11. 17.

18.

IN all places, and amongſt all perſons, let thy maine care alwaye be

be, to ſet forward Gods cauſe, to defend his truth, to maintaine his Name and eſtimation; whenſoever it is any way queſtioned or evill ſpoken of. Have a greater care of Gods glory, than of any others, or of thine own; and let it go neerer unto thee, to hear Gods Name diſhonoured, than to have thine own deſtroyed; yea rather than thou, O Lord, ſhouldſt loſe any part of thy glory, which is moſt proper, and precious unto thee, glory be for ever taken away from us, and our honour with all contempt and diſgrace layd in the duſt, loſs of credit and reputation be to all our doings, and ſayings, loſſe to our goods and good name, and whatſoever in this world is moſt dear unto us.

19.

BE ſlow to wrath in the greateſt injuries inferred upon thy ſelfe; but in the leaſt affront offered to God, put on all the indignation and rigour thou haſt: Be mild, and forbearing, ſuffering, and ſoft, in cauſes

of thy own, but in the quarrell of God be magnanimous and fervent, ſharp and ſevere, according to thy power, and place. *Moſes* in his own quarrell, in matter concerning himſelf, was a man moſt meek, and had not an equall unto him in his time, for peaceable and gentle behaviour (*a*); he quietly bare wonderfull wrongs, and was eaſily perſwaded to depart from his right: But when he was to deal for God, he took upon him an holy obſtinacy; He would not conſent unto *Pharao*, that ſo much as an hoofe ſhould remain behind them (*b*); but, when he ſpyed a Calf in the campe, when he perceived idolatry committed, and Gods glory comming into queſtion, He proclamed a bloody maſſacre, and pronounced the execution to be a conſecration; yea he with his partakers ſpeedily ſacrifiſed to God the blood of three thouſand malefactours (*c*). S. *Paul* was not mooved with thought of his own troubles, or danger of death; but when he ſaw the City of *Athens* wholy given to idolatry, his

[*a*] Numb. 12. 2, 3.

[*b*] Exod. 10. 26.

[*c*] Exod. 32. 27, 28, 29.

ſpirit

ſpirit was ſtirred in him, and though he did not as *Moſes*, becauſe he had not the like authority, yet he diſputed in the Synagogue with the Jewes, and with the devout perſons, and in the Market daily with them that met with him (*d*).

[*d*] Acts 17. 16, 17. &c.

20.

MAke, O make no long, yea no little tarrying to turne unto the Lord; put not off from day to day, from youth to old age, when Summer is turned into Winter, when the raine deſcendeth, and the flouds come, and the winds blow (*e*), when men are beſet with troubles and ſickneſs, with paine and grief, and torment, when their wits and ſenſes are taken up to deviſe remedyes againſt their diſeaſes, to prevent, or to ſuſtain the pangs of death; but remember thy Creatour, and remember a convenient time for thy Creatour, remember thy Creatour in the dayes of thy youth, in thy young years, in thy flouriſhing dayes, in thy time of proſperity;

[*e*] Matth. 7. 27.

whilſt

whilſt thy ſences are ſharpe, thy memory quick, thy wit ripe, thy capacity ready, thy underſtanding deep; Remember his might that thou mayeſt believe, his mercy that thou mayeſt hope, his juſtice that thou mayeſt be fearfull, his goodnes that thou mayeſt be thankfull (*g*).

[*g*] Auguſtinus.

21.

LOve all Gods children for his ſake, and obey all ſuperiours whom he hath appointed; The debt of love is generall, we all owe it, and we owe it unto all; but truſt in God, and depend upon him onely, joyne not any creature with him; He is contented and hath commanded, that we ſhould perform all other duties to all others, to whom they belong; Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, cuſtom to whom cuſtom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour appertaineth (*h*); provided alwayes that we yeeld them all to him chiefly, to him ever, and to none ſo much as him; But the worſhip

[*h*] Rom. 13. 7.

worſhip of confidence he hath reſerved wholy to himſelfe, neither may we communicate it to any other, upon any conditions, without extreme diſloyalty to him; what is it leſs than Idolatry for the meaneſt upon earth to tender it? and as much is it as ſacrilege for the mightieſt upon earth to take it.

22.

OPen thy mouth, and thy mind, for thy brethren, when they are moleſted and maligned, and laden with ſcandals and reproaches; but much more then for his cauſe, and for his glory, that made thy mouth and thy mind. Be not aſhamed of his righteouſnes, or of his Goſpell, leſt he be aſhamed of thee; confeſs his Name before the ſons of men, and thou ſhalt be ſure to be confeſſed before the ſons of God; Acknowledge Chriſts truth, and he will acknowledge thee, before the Angels and before his Father.

23.

23.

IT hath been the custome alwayes of the best sort, to offer, in the best manner, the best they had unto the best, that is to the Lord himself: Offer thou likewise the best to God whensoever thou hast cause to offer, if ever thou desire to be in the number of the best; otherwise the worst sort shall rise up in judgment and condemn thee; the very idolaters that worshipped the works of their own hands, and turned the truth of God into a lie, shall go before thee into the Kingdom of heaven: They in their oblations thought not the worst they had, or what came first to hand, as good enough, but brought the best they had, would have brought better if they could, and thought nothing too much for their newly devised God, they were content to spoil themselves that they might adorn their idols (*i*).

[i] Exod. 32. 2, 3.

24.

STand upon thy credit, and provide things honeſt before men; A good name is rather to be choſen than great riches, and loving favour than ſilver and gold (*k*); It ſeaſoneth the gifts that we have received, and maketh them profitable unto others. Be our parts never ſo tranſcendent, Be our gifts never ſo excellent, Be we never ſo loaden with ſpirituall graine, and food and treaſure; yet if we have not a good name to grace them, and countenance them, we can do very little or no good with them. It was an honour to *Demetrius* that he had a good report of all men, and of the truth it ſelf (*l*): but ſtand no more upon thy credit than upon thy conſcience, neither regard more the ſhame of men, than the fear of God; Have him ſtill before thine eyes, who hath thee alwayes before his eyes, look up unto him continually, who never leaveth to look down upon thee; ſo ſhalt thou walk evermore

[*k*] Prov. 22. 1.

[*l*] 3. Epiſt. John v. 12.

more in his preſence, and be ſure to become ever the more upright.

25.

NEither derogate any thing from the Majeſtie of God, albeit he vouchſafe ordinarily to uſe externall and ordinary meanes, in bringing his purpoſes to paſs; for he uſeth them freely, not of neceſſity, and he is as well able to manifeſt his power, without them, as with them; He hath a prerogative above the prerogative of any Prince, to work above, and beſides, yea and againſt nature. Neither yet magnify the creatures, which the Lord at any time is pleaſed to uſe, above that which is convenient, for any rare gifts and qualities that we ſee in them; for that were to ſet them in the place of God, who have no more efficacy than that which is given them from above from him who is the guide of nature and the cauſe of cauſes, according to his own pleaſure; but firſt and above all give thou glory to God, to whom onely

onely it is due; and then for the Lords ſake honour thou the means, becauſe God hath put the honour of an inſtrument upon it.

26.

NEver diſtruſt in thy leaſt, or greateſt vexation, any the leaſt or greateſt promiſe of God; for not one jot or one tittle of any ſhall fail to be performed, in due time. Man is variable in his love and promiſes to his neighbour; Men are ſubject, even the beſt men, both to deceive, and to be deceived; Men promiſe much, and perform little: but, as God is not deceived, ſo he cannot deceive, and, if thou be of any ſpirituall experience, thou canſt not but know, that the Lord often bringeth to paſſe, more than he promiſeth to do: Doubt not therefore at any time of his Word, who is many times better than his Word.

27.

ACcount it and acknowledge it alwayes with all thankfulnes, as a great mercy of God, that he ſendeth

ſendeth thee to ſchool, and ſpeaketh to thee (who art not able to abide the beauty and brightnes of his majeſtie) by men and brethren like unto thy ſelf, and ſubject to like paſſions; If God himſelf ſhould appeare unto thee, and utter his voyce, his voyce from heaven, then wouldſt thou fear, and quake, and fall down as a dead man; or cry out with great aſtoniſhment as many of the Fathers did, Alas I ſhall dye: we hear not the thunder without feare, we behold not the brightnes of the Sun without dazeling; how then ſhould we hear the immediate voice of God, or ſee his glory, without confuſion? Then, if by Gods mercyes, thou recovereſt thy ſences, thou wouldſt make requeſt to have the miniſters of the Word to ſpeak unto thee again, whom now thou deſpiſeſt; and whoſe words thou contemneſt now as baſe, and contemptible, thou wouldſt then deſire and imbrace.

28.

REmember it, and conſider it, as a principle, whenſoever thou heareſt; that howſoever we may not obey either man or Angell, if he ſpeak any thing contrary to the written Word, though he come with all ſhew of learning, and all appearance of unſpotted and undefiled pureneſs; yet the greateſt princes of the world are bound to heare and obey the meaneſt man that God doth ſend, ſo far as he teacheth according to his commiſſion; If Princes reſiſt the word of truth in the Preachers mouth, they reſiſt not the meſſenger, but the maſter that ſent him.

29.

GRow better, as thou groweſt elder; Be not like a dead hedge, with the many, by ſtanding longer, waxing rottener; Art thou paſt growth in body? yet art thou not come to thy full growth in ſoul; Neither ſhalt thou ever ſo long as

thou

thou ſojourneſt here in this valley of teares, untill thy faith be turned into viſion, and thy hope into fruition. As a new born babe deſire the ſincere milk of the Word, that thou mayeſt grow thereby (*m*); The Apoſtle ſpeaketh it to the eldeſt as well as to the youngeſt. There is no bound for this thy growth, but the common bound of thy mortality: Grow ſtill in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt (*n*); without whom, all knowledge is ignorance, all wiſedom fooliſhnes, all learning madneſs, and all religion errour, or hypocriſy, or ſuperſtition; and of whom, the greateſt part of that which thou knoweſt is not the leaſt part of that which thou knoweſt not; Never be to teach unwilling, or to learn aſhamed.

[*m*] ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ αὐξηθῆτε 1 Pet. 2. 2.

[*n*] 2 Pet. 3. 18, &c.

30.

THink not thou haſt knowledge enough, for then thou clearely bewrayeſt thy want of knowledge; ſuch

ſuch as have attained and received the greateſt knowledge, do find in themſelves the greateſt ignorance; ſuch as imagine themſelves to be moſt ſure and rich in underſtanding, are indeed moſt ſottiſh and childiſh in the matters of God: like empty veſſels that make the greateſt ſound. Hereby thou ſhalt try thy ſelf, whether thou haſt reached to any meaſure of acceptable knowledge; if it work and kindle in thee a deſire of more knowledge; if it do *præferre facem*, hold the light before thee, to ſee thy own weakneſs; and if it teach thee that ſtill thy wants are greater than thy wealths.

31.

DEſpiſe not, undervalew not, the the holy Word of God, becauſe it is conveied unto thee by ſinfull man: Forſake not the exerciſes of religion for the wickedneſs or unworthineſs of the Miniſter; As thou art not to receive his doctrine for his good life, ſo thou art not to reject it for his evil life: An evill Meſſenger may deliver a good meſſage. The

Phariſees in the dayes of Chriſt were lewd livers, full of pride, covetouſnes, hypocriſy, and diſſimulation, and many of them of other tribes than of *Levy*; yet ſo long as they ſate in *Moſes* chaire, that is, held themſelves to *Moſes* text and doctrine, the diſciples are commanded ded to heare them (as damned hypocrits as they were) and to do whatſoever they commanded (o); whiche words our Saviour would never have delivered, if either the Miniſter might have defiled the Word, or any man be allowed for the faults of the Miniſter to have rejected and refuſed the Lords Myſteries.

[o] Matth. 23. 2, 3.

32.

IF thou wouldſt increaſe in learning, and grow in grace, ſet thine ears to harken to the Word; if thou wouldſt not have thy prayers deſpiſed, deſpiſe not the Word; to heare the Word come thou never careleſs, leſt thou depart fruitleſs; come thou never with any contempt, leaſt thou reape condemnation

tion; whosoever busieth himself in other things, as gazing here and there, observing clothes, and countenances, removing, talking, beckning, nodding, and such like gestures, whil'st he is hearing, heareth but with half an ear, if with half an ear, whereas both are too little for so high a work; whereas all the powers both of soul and body should for that time wait upon the voice of the Preacher.

33.

WHensoever thou art resolved to hear, be an humble suter to God for a blessing both upon thy self and the preacher; upon the preacher to prepare his speech, upon thy self to perswade thy soul: For though hearing of necessity go before faith, yet faith doth not of necessity follow after hearing; The fowler catcheth not every bird he calleth, neither doth the preacher win every soule he wooeth; whom the Holy Ghost teacheth not inwardly they return unlearned (p); It is not

[p] *Quos Spiritus Sanctus non intus docet, indocti redeunt.* August. in epist. Johan. tract. 3.

mans words that maketh man underſtand Gods Words, It is God that maketh him to underſtand (*q*); He hath his chaire in heaven that mooveth hearts on earth (*r*).

[q] *Non verbi hominis ſit ut intelligatur verbum Dei, facit Deus ut intelligatis.* Aug.

[r] *Cathedram in cœlo habet qui corda movet.* Aug.

34.

COme not to the houſe of God, onely to heare others taught, but to learn thy ſelf too; come not to refreſh thy ſelf, but to reform thy life; Affect not ſuch teaching, as appeareth to be moſt plauſible, but ſuch as is moſt profitable; not that which may pleaſe the ear, but that which may pierce the heart: Attend not ſo much what well digeſted order, what eloquence, what learning the preacher ſheweth, as what miſopinions he detecteth, what ſchiſmes or hereſies he convinceth, what ſins he reprooveth, that ſo thou mayeſt the ſooner come to repentance. There is danger in not hearing, and no leſs daunger in hearing and not profiting; It is not more wicked not to come to hear, than to come and hear, and mind to be wicked;

ked; Better not come to hearing, than not come, by hearing, to be better.

35.

HEar not the Word by parts, and parcels, by clauſes or cantels onely, ſo farr as it agreeth with thy humor, and keepeth fair and far off from medling with thy offences; but attend and hear as well the judgments of God thundered out againſt thee, in the Law, as the ſweet promiſes pronounced, and offered in the Goſpell; as well the laying open of thy own ſins, as the publiſhing of the ſins of other men: we are ready to hear all things that are commanded thee of God, ſaith *Cornelius* (ſ), when *Peter* came to preach at his houſe; not to hear only ſuch things as we like, but to hear all things that are commanded thee of God; though thou be charged to preſs moſt earneſtly upon us, to turn from our moſt pleaſing ways. O who commeth to hear now adayes with the like mind? And yet, as he muſt be reformed whoſoever will

(ſ) Acts 10. 33.

will be ſaved, ſo he muſt with a calme, and ſubdued heart, intertain all juſt reproofs, whoſoever deſireth to be reformed.

36.

Submit thy ſelf unto thy Miniſter with reverence and patience, not onely when thou heareſt pleaſing things, precious promiſes, and gracious comforts; but when thou heareſt him, according to Gods Word, ſounding an alarm in thine ears, uttering reproofs, delivering threatnings, and denouncing judgments, againſt the prevailing ſins of the time (and therefore perhaps thine amongſt the reſt) as lying, ſlandering, murmuring, and treaſon, pride and oppreſſion, malice and cruelty: The which howſoever it ſeem as bitter potions and very diſtaſtfull to fleſh and bloud, yet is it very wholeſom for the ſoul and ſpirit, may help to purge away the groſs humours of ſin, and preſerve from eternall death. No wickeder man than he, who being hardened in ſin hateth to be reproo-

ved,

fed, who cannot without raging indure to hear him, by whom he is meekly and wisely rebuked for his sins.

37.

THat thou mayest not perish, but profit, by the threatnings of God; know that the denunciations of Gods Judgments, are, for the most part, conditionall, not absolute, towards his people; and to be understood with this exception, except they repent (t); If we be hereupon stirred up to repentance and new obedience, even in the greatest and most fearfull threatnings of Gods heavy Judgments, there is comfort remaining, and hope of grace & mercy to be found, there is health in sickness, and life in death.

[t] Luke 13. 3. 5. Apoc. 2. 5.

38.

NEither read, nor hear, as travailers by the Law might eat grapes (u), that is, eat some for the present time, but carry none away with them; but whatsoever good thou

[u] Deut. 23. 25.

thou readeſt or heareſt, learn to remember it, and remember to follow it; remember it, love it, practiſe it; remember it that thou mayeſt earneſtly love it, love it that thou mayeſt continually practiſe it, and perſevere in it; to read it, or hear it, and not to remember it, is ridiculous; to remember it, and not to love it, is vain; to love it, and not to practiſe it, is abſurd; but to remember it, love it, practiſe it, and perſevere in it, is the way to everlaſting bleſſedneſs.

39.

UNderſtand this and mark it, that outward ſervice ſeparated from inward obedience is not reſpected but rejected of God; If thou keep from him the one, he careth not for the other; naked hearing is but a needleſs halting in Gods ſight, which God cannot abide; bare receiving of the holy Sacrament without faith, without love, without conſcience, is but a baſe deceiving of thy own ſoul.

40.

40.

KNowledge and practice of Gods will are as two wings whereby we muſt flie up to heaven; there is no flying with the one alone; It is not enough to know what to do, unleſs we labour to do what wee know; knowledge without obedience and imployment is not a vertue for good, but a venom for hurt, and in ſuch an unthrifty ſteward, the more, increaſe of ſcience, the more increaſe of ſorrow: For what can he look for in the end, but an equall number of ſtripes, according to the meaſure of his unfruitfull underſtanding? Even ignorance thorough want of the means, ſhall exempt no perſon from offence, or condemnation; He that knowes not his maſters will ſhall not altogether eſcape unpuniſhed, though his caſe be more tolerable, though his cenſure ſhall be the leſs, though he be beaten with fewer ſtrips; but on him, to whom the Lord hath vouchſafed the means of knowledge, will he

he be sure to powr down the greater vengeance; but that servant that knew his Masters will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his (w) will, shall be beaten with many stripes; the better he knows, the worse he shall be beaten.

[w] Luke 12. 47, 48.

41.

A Dictibe neither too much, nor too little to thy Minister; Neither despise him, nor deify him, as the manner of some is; Esteem him not as a principall author, but as a subordinate actor, Not as a Lord, (which the Apostles every where disclaim) but as a steward, Not as a Master, but a Minister; And yet account him, not as a common and ordinary servant, but a man of God (x), a servant of the most high God, that sheweth unto thee the way of Salvation (y); And yet account him, as he is indeed, not only a seer, but an overseer (z), a steward of Gods high secrets (a), a messenger of the Lord of hosts (b), who is appointed to be the opener and declarer

[x] 2 Kings 4. 27.
[y] Acts 16. 17.
[z] Acts 20. 28.
[a] 1 Cor. 4. 1.
[b] Malac. 2. 7.

clarer of the will of God amongst the people; by whose ambassage there is peace concluded and reconciliation ministerially made between God and man (*c*); the mouth of God unto the people by preaching, and by praying the mouth of the people unto God; one that in speciall place standeth before God, and ministreth unto him upon earth, as the Angells minister unto him in heaven (*d*).

[*c*] 2 Cor. 5. 18, 19, 20.

[*d*] Rev. 1. 20. 2. 1. 3. 1.

42.

WHatsoever publick mislike, or privat unkindness fall out, yet fall not out of charity with him, whom God hath thought fittest to make thy Pastour; That speciall proviso, that strict charge, is not yet out of date, but in full force all thy life long, Take heed to thy self that thou forsake not the *Levite*, as long as thou livest upon the earth (*e*); Did God, as men commonly do, make slight account of the *Levite*, he would not set so strong a guard about him, for his credit, and preservation. The Jewes have a saying, that

[*e*] Deut. 12. 19.

that whoſoever dieth in the diſpleaſure of his *Rabbi*, that is, of him that hath charge of his ſoul, he ſhall not be forgiven in this world, or the world to come: I dare not affirm ſo much; But this I dare affirm, and can confirm, that dying, or living, to deſpiſe thy overſeer, if it be not unpardonable, yet it is unprofitable, and that for thy ſelf: obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves (to their good exhortations) for they watch for your ſouls, as they that muſt give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you, ſaith the Apoſtle (*f*), For if you grieve your overſeers you will make them faint and quaile away, and ſo you ſhall want guides to go in and out before you, and then you ſhall be ready and a fit prey for that roaring Lyon that goeth about ſeeking whom he may devour. Nay I dare boldly ſay more, to deſpiſe thy Prieſt, though never ſo low, is a ſin of ſo high nature, that it is no lower than to deſpiſe the high Prieſt Chriſt Jeſus, He that deſpiſeth

[*f*] Heb. 13. 17.

piſeth you (in thought, word, or deed) deſpiſeth me; and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me, ſaith Chriſt himſelf (*g*). [g] Luke 10. 16.

43.

FAithleſs wretches and no better let them ever be in thy eſteem, Never think them truſt-worthy, whom thou ſeeſt malitiouſly bent againſt the perſons of their faithfull Paſtours; Revile not, abuſe not, offend not any of thoſe that are called of God to be the Miniſters of his Word, to be the ſtewards of his myſteries (*h*), and to be his Ambaſſadours (*i*), whom he hath ſet to be neer unto him, and to be in ſpeciall grace and favour with him. Dare any contend with him that is the Kings friend or favourite? Do not all deſire, and ſeek his favour? How then dare any diſgrace and diſhonour thoſe, and ſeek their utter ruine, whom God hath pleaſed to make, as it were, of his privy Counſell, not to give him Counſell, but to take counſell from him, and to reveale [h] 1 Cor. 4. 1. [i] 2 Cor. 5. 20.

veale his counsell to the sons of men (*k*)?

[*k*] Amos 3. 7. Acts 20. 27.

44.

IN all thy secret and unknown sins (which thou tookest not to be sins, which thou in weakness and ignorance hast committed), A generall acknowledgment, and generall (if serious) mourning for them, may procure thy pardon; but thy known sins thou must confess in speciall, the severall kind of them at least, though thou canst not remember the individuals; and pray with earnestnes of spirit, as for life, and death, for the remission of them; thou must uncase, and uncover them, with all their circumstances, if thou wouldst have God to cover them with the precious garment of JESUS CHRIST; Blessed is the man whose sins are covered, *David* saith (*l*), but whose sins are covered by Christ, not by himself; himself must open them; *David*'s heart smote him after he had numbered the people out of his meer pride and vanity to know how many

[*l*] Psal. 32. 1.

ny thousand strong he was: and when he saw multitudes of the people swept away with the pestilence for his sin, with extreme sorrow of heart he cryed unto the Lord, and said, Lo I have sinned, and I have done wickedly, but these sheep what have they done? Let thy hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my Fathers house (*m*).

[*m*] 2 Sam. 24. 17.

45.

ALwayes remember that there are privative sins, as well as pontive, negative, as well as affirmative; Not to do good, is to do evill; As well the forsaking or neglecting of necessary duties, as the practising and pursuing opposite evills may make a man stand guilty of sin in Gods sight; He is called a wicked and slothfull servant, who put not his Lords money to the exchangers, though he had hid it in the earth, and kept it safely; and the same is cast into utter darkness not for wasting his talent, or abusing it unto oppression, but

but for letting it ruſt, for not indeavouring to uſe it to his maſters the Donors advantage, according to his appointment (*n*); Even Chriſt himſelf yeeldeth this much againſt himſelf, that if he had not done that good deed to the man with the withered hand, he had done evill, and if he had not given life to that dead member of his, he had ſo far killed him (*o*); It was not acting enmity, but omitting amity; not the taking away of others goods, but not giving of his own, that threw that delicious cormorant *Dives* into Hell (*p*); He took nothing from *Lazarus*, He robbed him not of a rag, He got not from him a crum of bread, or a drop of water; and yet he is accounted cruell and unmercifull, and is caſt into torments (*q*).

[n] Matth. 25.26, 27, 30.

[o] Luke 6.9.

[p] *Non quod abſulerit aliena, ſed quod non donârit ſua.* Greg. homil. 40. in Evang.

[q] Luke 16, 23.

46.

BEware of ſuperficialnes, and intertain ſeriouſneſs whenſoever thou art about any divine office, either for others, or for thy ſelf; Let not thy mind wander, remember what

what thou haſt in hand, conſider what thou art doing, do it with thy beſt exactneſs; In examination call not only thy proceedings and deeds, but thy intents and thoughts to account; In humiliation condemn thy inward cogitations which appear vain, as well as thy outward courſes which appear violent; In reformation omit not to purge thy ſoul from impious imaginations, when thou meaneſt to cleanſe thy life from ungodly converſation. Oh there is no ſin can be ſo ſmall, but it deſerveth the anger of God, and is too great to be cheriſhed; Nay the very entrance and being of any vile conceipt within us, though we do not cheriſh it, though neither deed follow, nor heart conſent, is yet no leſs than a traitor to Gods Majeſtie.

47.

TRuſt not to thy trembling at the judgments of God, to thy fear to commit ſin, to thy ſorrow for it when thou haſt committed it; truſt not to the contrition of thy

heart, to the cõfession of thy tongue, to the repairment of the ill gotten goods, which the common Papists make to be the three essentiall parts of true repentance; For even the very reprobate may go so far in their profession, and yet afterwards fall away; All such qualities and practices might be found in some measure in *Judas*, that betrayed his master (*r*); but let thy repentance proceed with conversion to God, with hope of mercy, with prayer for pardon, with bewailing whatsoever is amiss, and labouring to amend whatsoever thou bewailest; with hatred of sin, with love of righteousnes; but let it proceed with turning thine eyes that were windows to let in iniquity, into doors to let it out; but let it persevere with a true turning of thy heart, and a right reformation of thy life; For that is the way that hath the promise: He that confesseth, and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy (*s*); He that joynes with his acknowledgment of what he hath offended in, a setled purpose

[r] Matth. 27.34.

[s] Prov. 28, 13.

purpoſe to renounce and ſtrive againſt the ſame, yea and all corruptions elſe, He it is whom God accepts, He it is which ſhall find favour with the Lord; He that confeſſeth his ſins, and would forſake his ſins, before the earthly Judge, is many times condemned; but he that confeſſeth his ſins, and forſaketh his ſins, before the heavenly Judge, is alwayes acquitted.

48.

WHat though thou canſt not attaine to loth ſinfulneſs with ſo great a deteſtation, and to follow righteouſneſs with ſo great a deſire, as ſome other Saints have done? yet be not maskered, be not diſanimated, fear not the loſing of thy reward, if thou keep on ſtill according to thy ſtrength, to flie the one truly, and follow the other faithfully. God uſeth not to charge any man with the evill which he alloweth not, but hateth, and ſtriveth againſt, though his feet be ſometimes in a wrong path; and he

cannot thoroughly avoid it; and how mercifully doth he approve every man for the good that he desireth & indeavoureth to do, though he now and then swarve from it, and cannot perfectly effect it?

49.

IF thy soul be truly penitent, with great grief and heavinesse of heart, for all thy sins; If thou sincerely cry to God for mercy, and forgiveness, and bring forth fruits worthy amendment of life; If thou renounce al merit of righteousnes in thy self, and flie to the merits and righteousnes of Christ; Never account thy estate and condition forlorn and desperat; Never doubt of Gods mercy though thou hast sinned often, and often shewed thy weakness in the same sins; Dareest thou set any bounds to Gods grace? When the Apostle *S. Peter* asked Christ how often he should forgive his brother, whether seven times? Did not our Saviour answer, Not seven times only, but seventy

times seven (*t*), in the bare letter of the text, but according to the true meaning of the same, even so many times as he trespassed against him, though they were times beyond speciall number (*u*)? O speech full of consolation, how doth it animate us to repose on the Lords mercy? Is not the Lord greater than man? Is he not better than man? If he require so great compassion in a man, in a sinfull man, to forgive his brother trespassing against him so often; what compassion is in himself, to forgive his own poor penitent creature that prostrates himself to his mercy? The Lord, who hath enjoyned us to forgive so often, will much more freely do it himself; whose mercy is infinite, whose favour is incomprehensible, whose loving kindness indureth for ever.

[*t*] Matth. 18. 22.

[*u*] *Toties quoties* August. *serm.* 15. *de verbis Domini. Vicibus innumerabiliter innumerabilibus*, Maldonat. *in locum. Species numeri magni pro numero magno in genere.* Piscator *in loc.*

50.

LOok both behind thee to bewaile sins past, and before thee to beware of sins to come; He re-

pents not heartily that amends not thoroughly, resolveth not at least thoroughly to mend. With a right deploration of sin, there is ever a true detestation of sin; Death may defeat the performance of thy purpose, or God may permit Sathan to tempt thee afresh presently, and powerfully, but there must be in thine heart a resolution, at least, an intent of reformation, or els it is no sincere, but a seeming repentance.

51.

THinke it not enough to make conscience of some greater sins, so long as thou neglectest smaller; Neither yet make conscience of some petty sins, neglecting greater: Beware of limiting thy duty to God, perform obedience to thy utmost power; If, when thou hast done thy best, thou yet fail in fit measure; Be not sowr in thy self where God is sweet, vex not thy self out of measure; God measureth not our work but our will; He remitteth what is wanting, He receiveth what what is well.

32.

NEver think it enough to believe only in generall, that God is just, and that Christ hath suffered to satisfie the justice of God; For (whatsoever some prime Papists teach (*w*), what can a confused and implicit faith profit? how can that faith ever save thee, when the ungodly and Sathan believe as much, when the Devils believe and tremble? but indevour, by all good meanes, to be able to apply Christ and his benefits unto thy self in particular; The particular faith is the onely comfortable faith, and by this the just man liveth (*x*); As faith is the life of a Christian soul, so an individuall application is the life of faith; O God, thou art my God, saith *David* (*y*); and againe, Deliver me O my God, out of the hands of the wicked (*z*); and again, Thou art my God, and I will praise thee, thou art my God, I will exalt thee (*a*); and so in many other Psalmes; My Lord and my God,

[*w*] *Bellar. lib. 1. de justific. cap. 7.*

[*x*] Habac. 2. 4.

[*y*] Psal. 63. 1.

[*z*] Psal. 71. 4.

[*a*] Psal. 118. 28.

[b] John, 20. 28. God, saith *Thomas* (*b*), being ravished with Christs assured presence, and his having obtained victory over his doubting: who hath loved me, and given himself for me, [c] Galat. 2. 20. saith *Paul* (*c*), apprehending and applying the merits of his Saviour to his soule, as the medicine to the malady.

53.

IF the departing of others from their faith, whom thou conceivedst more likely to have departed from their lives; Sathans alleging and aggravating thine infirmities, affronting & affrighting thee with Gods Justice, troubles and persecutions, one after another (like *Job*'s messengers) shake and stagger thee, make thee question thy own faith; yet if with thy faith in God thou feelest in thy self a hatred of sin, and a desire of righteousness, which refraineth thee from much wickedness, and stirreth thee up to some works of vertue (although there remain in thee the relicks of sin, yea a motion unto sin contrary

ry to the Spirit of God, which alſo breaketh out ſometimes into actuall ſins) yet if thy conſcience ſhall not upbraid thee with ſin wilfull and preſumptuous; if thy hearts delight hath always been in Gods Statutes, & thy ſtudy to thy ſtrength to abandon all iniquity, ſoundly without guile, and humbly without pride, It is a hand and ſeal unto thy ſoule to make it ſure thou ſhalt be ſaved.

54.

DOſt thou doubt and fear that thou truly loveſt not grace and ſalvation, and yet loveſt all the ordinances of God for mans ſalvation, and yet hungreſt and thirſteſt after the word and Sacraments, and all other Chriſtian exerciſes? Be not deceived, be not diſcouraged, Theſe are ſure effects of ſincerity; Theſe things make it apparent that thy doubts are of no weight, and thy fears frivolous; Thou couldſt not with ſo great care and circumſpection ſeek, if thou wert not willing to find; Thou couldſt not with

with so great speed and resolution travell, if thou hadst not hearty mind to thy journeys end, even the salvation of thy soul (*d*).

(*d*) 1 Pet. 1. 9.

55.

DOst thou feel sometimes a dolefull change in thy mind? Is thy soul cast down, and disquieted within thee? Doth thy faith sometimes fearfully stagger? Art thou ready to give over thy hold of God? Yet out of his gracious goodness will he never give over the hold that he hath of thee; His anchor is so firmly setled and fixed upon the ground of thy heart, that no stormes or tempests can shake or loose it; Art thou prone sometimes to leave God? yet is he resolved not to leave thee, or to lose thee; The Lord hath bought thee at too high a price to part upon such low termes from thee.

56.

SEeſt thou the wicked ſo forward to put evill motions in practice, that they no ſooner apprehend them, but approve them, no ſooner approove, them than execute them, yea proceed and continue in them cheerfully and conſtantly? Tell not them of Beares or Lyons in the way: They are buſy in purſuing their game, and they will get it whatſoever it coſt them, for they have ſo decreed and ſet it down; Oh be thou as ready to intertaine the good motions of Gods holy Spirit; Eſteem of them highly, and imbrace them heartily, practiſe them freely and faithfully, and return the ſtrength to the giver; ſo ſhal God plentifully powr down his grace upon thee, ſo ſhall thou never want favour after favour; God will never fail to add good to him, who imployes that good which he hath received; Imploy all thoſe gifts thou haſt, and look for more; Imploy them not, and look to loſe what thou haſt; whoſoever hath to

him

him ſhall be given, and he ſhall have more abundance (*e*), and whoſoever hath not from him ſhall be taken even that which he ſeemeth to have (*f*).

[*e*] Matth. 13. 12.

[*f*] Luke 8. 18. καὶ ὃ δοκεῖ ἔχειν.

57.

BE not a ſluggard in any good calling, and much leſs in thy calling to Chriſtianity; notwithſtanding all diſcouragements, temptations and oppoſitions to the contrary, that may ſtand up in the way to hinder thee; The calling of a Chriſtian can leaſt of all others ſtand with idleneſs; If the idle mans belly ſhall be pinched and ſtarved for want of food (*g*), and his back cloathed with raggs (*h*); If by doing nothing he ſhall bring himſelf to nothing, and having no calling poverty have a calling to arreſt him; How ſhall the idle Chriſtians ſoule ſpeed; what regard, what intertainment ſhall that have? wiſh not only for grace and ſalvation, but work out thy ſalvation with fear and trembling (*i*); If every languiſhing and lazy flaſh of every wiſher

[*g*] Prov. 6. 11.

[*h*] Prov. 23. 21.

[*i*] Philip. 2. 12.

ſher and woulder were enough, there would be ſwarmes of reprobates in heaven, flocks and flights of people would never fall into deſtruction, if words and deſires without religious and righteous deeds would preſerve them from it; *Balaam* that wretched, covetous hypocrit, wiſhed that he might dy the death of the righteous (*k*); but he took no care to live the life of the righteous, which might have aſſured him of dying well; The fooliſh Virgins would have gladly gone in with the Bridegroom, they hoped after oil of the wiſer Virgins, and begged hard to be let in, if that might have prevailed; But they bewailed their want, and went to buy oil for their Lamps when it was too late; but they would not be at the paines and charges to provide themſelves of oil in due time; but they had it not in readineſs when the Lord came ſuddenly in the night: and therefore they reaped the ſoure fruit of their ſweet ſecurity, they had the gates of the Bridegroom, and the door of eternall life ſhut up againſt

[*k*] Numb. 23. 10.

gainst them, and were excluded into perpetuall darknes where is weeping and gnashing of teeth (*l*).

[*l*] Matth. 25. 2, 3, &c.

58.

IN all the actions and transactions of thy life, Let thy projects be pious and righteous, and thy practices proportionable and allowables; to aime at the best ends by by-wayes is schismaticall, to walk in the most worthy wayes to wry intents is hypocriticall, to desire neither lawfull works nor lawfull wayes is Atheisticall, but to labour at least for the right prize by the right path, is alwayes both comfortable and commendable, is both the office and wisdom of a Christian.

59.

LEt there be in thy purpose sincerity, in thy practice integrity, in thy disposition diligence, in thy proceeding perseverance; Let thy entryes both to God and man, be without dissembling, without diminishing;

ſhing, without repining, without revolting.

60.

BE alwayes rich in the work of the Lord (*m*), ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate (*n*); Be ready to every work (*o*), which either the common duty of Chriſtianity, or thy own private calling requireth of thee; or with ſuch ſacrifices God is well pleaſed (*p*); and faith very probably prooved; The hiſtoricall faith, or faith of miracles may appear without good works, as in the Devils who have one of them, and in *Judas* that damned reprobate who had both of them; but the true juſtifying faith that ingraffs thee into Chriſt, that reconciles thee to God, that quits thy ſin, and ſaves thy ſoul can never be known to others nor to thy ſelf, but by good works; There may happily be works where there is not faith, but there is certainly no true faith where there are no works; They are the tokens and trials, the pulſe and breath at leaſt

[*m*] 1 Cor. 15. 58.
[*n*] 1 Tim. 6. 18.
[*o*] Titus 3. 1.
[*p*] Heb. 13. 16.

of

of a lively faith; and by want of them, thou mayeſt as well conclude want of faith, as by the ceaſing of the pulſe, and breath, conclude the ceaſing of life.

61.

IT is not enough to do well, unleſs thou ſpeedily diſpatch what thou doſt; Delayes, in any thing that is good, are ill, and in the beſt things worſt; deadneſs and drowſineſs in doing duty is no fit ſervice in his ſight, who requireth ſerventneſs, and cheerfulneſs in all good actions; There may be as great a fault in practiſing a vertue too late, as in performing a vice too ſoon; ſay not to thy neighbour, go and come again, and to morrow I will give thee, when thou haſt it by thee (*q*), when thou haſt wherewith to ſupply his wants to day: To morrow may never come, either to him, or thee, or, if it come to thee, it may come unſeaſonable and unable to do him good; what availeth it to let the graſs grow when

[*q*] Prov. 3. 28.

when the horſe ſtarveth? or when the ſteed is ſtollen to ſhut the ſtable door?

62.

ART thou advanced to authority, and eſtabliſhed in high place? make not much of vile perſons of what eſtate ſoever, whoſe true title, for all their other titles, is, that they are the enemies of God: but make much of, and be ſure to honour thoſe that fear the Lord, and walk in his wayes, how mean ſoever they are upon earth, if ever thou deſire and hope to inherit glory with them in heaven. Look not with ſo great regard how perſonable men are, or of what birth, or wealth, as of what faith and conſcience, and pious deportment; ſhew moſt curteſy to thoſe that are moſt Chriſtian, and give beſt countenance to them that are of beſt behaviour. If God have deputed thee to keep his room, to reſemble his Majeſtie, to bear his image, it is not onely comely but neceſſary, thou ſhouldſt follow his example,

whose bountifull favours never fail the righteous, nor the light of his loving countenance at any time shineth on the wicked.

63.

LOve all, even thy deadlyest enemyes, and do good unto them, and that not only in their prosperity and flourishing estate, but in their greatest need, so far as thou dost not maintain, and help them against Christ; yea as thou seest the gifts of God more clearly to shine, & more manifestly to multiply in them, so let thy love increase towards them; Let not their will or work to hurt thee, overcome thy will or work to help them; Adjoin not thy impatiency to their injustice, keep them not off from thee by opposing, or upbraiding, but rather draw them nearer unto thee, by prayer and kindness; It is in vain for thee to represent and press, what evill they have done unto thee, how many wayes they have wronged thee; should Christ have loved none but

his

his friends, he had never loved thee; It is impoſſible for men to do that wrong one to another, which we have done all to God; There can be no ſurer pledge to thy ſoul, that thy ſins are forgiven with God, and that he favoureth thee, than if thou find a readineſs in thy ſelf to remit injuries, and to favour thoſe that do them; but eſpecially make much of the houſhold of faith, but more affectionatly and more liberally Chriſtians by profeſſion, Saints by calling, heires by faith, but eſpecially do good to thoſe that are the ſons of God by grace and adoption, that are thy brethren by grace & ſanctification, whom God hath ingraven as a ſignet in the palm of his hand, and whom he tendereth as the apple of his ey; Let them have the privilege of an elder brother, even a doubly portion; who when for thy miſcarriages they privatly blame thee, do not meanly profit thee, and pleaſure thee, by ſhewing thy ſins to thy ſelf, and covering them from others; and yet that is all the injury thou art like to receive from them.

Majori affectu & effectu, Ben.

64.

BE not hollow-hearted, but sincerely affected; Be not, like subtill *Saul* (*r*), and hypocriticall *Absalon* (*ſ*), onely kind in fair salutations, and friendly words; but, like faithfull *Jonathan* (*t*), and honeſt *Oneſiphorus* (*u*), in deeds make good thy kindneſs, and manifeſt thy truth; and that not forcibly, or with grudging, but with good will, cheerfully, and that not ſparingly, or baſely, but bountifully, and with a large hand; If thou ſhalt do this from the true ground, becauſe God hath commanded, and to a right end, that God may be glorified, and thy neighbour bettered, there ſhall not be wanting any thing to true liberality.

[*r*] 1 Sam. 18. 17.
[*ſ*] 2 Sam. 15. 5.
[*t*] 1 Sam. 18. 4.
[*u*] 2 Tim. 1. 16.
μὴ ἀναγκαστὸν ἀλλὰ μετ' ἐκουσίου

65.

SUch as are wronged, and oppreſſed, and cannot help themſelves, be ready to help, by all good means thou canſt afford; by thy deeds, and by

by thy words, by thy Counſell and by thy comforts, by thy pleading with men for them, and prayers to to God; and the more help them the weaker they are to help themſelves, and the ſtronger thou art to help them; He that haſteneth to be mercifull to another, ſhall himſelf in the like caſe ſooneſt obtaine mercy; Neither is there a ſurer ſigne than mercy to be found of any mans preſent being under mercy.

66.

FOr thy neighbours vertues allow not his vices; Neither for his vices condemne his vertues; Hate not ſo much his ſodaine paſſions, as never to love his ſober actions; obſcure not the glory of Gods gifts upon whomſoever beſtowed; but wiſely diſtinguiſhing between every mans good properties, and his bad, Let the one be as a rock, the other as a rule, let the one divert thee, the other direct thee.

67.

NEither seek, nor admit imbowelled intireness, or any speciall familiarity with those notorious hypocrits, those foul-murderers, who either poyson the Church with heresy, or (which is worse than to sacrifise to Idols) dismember and rent it asunder with schism; who labour to alienate the minds of men from their right teachers, and from the Word and Sacraments in the Church of this Land, because of their private dislikings and discontents; (to the hinderance of the chief business, and furtherance of the common enemy) whose friendship is servitude and abides not equality, whose kisses are treasons, whose religion is policy, and whose policy wickedness; who infect all whom they can draw within the compass of communication; and intise as many as they can possibly within that compass; with whom a man cannot peaceably live in this world, except he will believe with them, and with whom

Pejus est Ecclesiam scindere, quàm idolis sacrificare. Auguſt.

a man cannot believ, if he perfectly truſt to live in the world to come.

68.

BE not more carefull what thou eateſt, or drinkeſt, than amongſt whom thou eateſt, or drinkeſt: For there are ſome whoſe places we ſhould rather deſire, than their perſons, and their roomes, rather than their company; who have forſaken God, and whom God hath forſaken; with the which loathſom and deſpicable men, more virulent and contagious than the breath of a *Baſiliſk*, we may neither eat, nor drink, that is, not familiarly converſe; Evill words corrupt good manners (*w*); and what then doth evill company do? Oh what dangerous infection hath evill converſation often brought and wrought in thoſe, who had made no ſmall progreſs in Chriſtianity? converſation breedeth that in continuance, that is not beaten off in any continuance.

[*w*] 1 Cor. 15. 33.

69.

69.

ARe they onely now adayes held complete and furnished cap-a-pe that can sort themselves to all companies, that can indifferently converse with all manner of persons, yea though they know their ill qualities as well as if they were stamped in their foreheads? yet consider with all diligence whom thou admittest into thy house, or in whose house thou betakest thy self to dwell; avoid all private and customary conversation with the wicked, though not publick commerce (x); Decline their very presence as much as thou mayest, except thou be to discerne their diseases, and minister medicines to cure them, or necessity of some duty of religion, or of thy vocation, or love or humanity command thee to be with them. What man in his right wits would wittingly and wilfully thrust himself into the hands of thieves, having no less charge than the precious graces of Gods Spirit about

[x] *Malorum consortia fugere debemus quoad privatam consuetudinem non quoad publicam conversationem.* Ambrosius offic. lib. 1. cap. 18.

about him? Enter not into the path of the wicked, ſaith *Salomon*, and go not in the way of evill men, avoid it, paſs not by it, turn from it, and paſs away (*y*); what an heap of words doth he uſe? and to what ſerve ſo many repetitions? but to ſhew the exceeding danger of communicating with the wicked, and how hardly we are drawn to leave them.

[*y*] Prov. 4. 14, 15.

70.

BEtter others by thy company, or by thy company better thy ſelf; Either alwayes learn ſome good of others, or be teaching ſome good thing to others; Hath thy neighbour any reſplendent grace? make it thine; Haſt thou any rare gift? make it his; what rather ſhould be the center of all our converſation and conference, than to help and further one another in knowledge, and the practice thereof, than to make thoſe that are bad good, and thoſe which are good better?

71.

72.

Flatter not thy self that any sin is the less, the more commit it; walk not on the bolder in any sin, because thou seest a multitude of fellowes in it. For what is an unregenerate and unsanctified company, but a rout of Rebells and an heap of confederates conspiring together against God? Even the learnedst heathen thought it not the least part of their glory, to steer a course (like the *Antipodes*) clean opposite to the liking of the vulgar; How much more, though thou hast multitudes wilfully to go before thee, shouldst thou know, whom they follow, before thou willingly follow and joyn thy self with them? If thou offend with others, thou shalt be punished with others; and, if thou sin with great troupes, thou shalt suffer with great troupes; canst thou think it will be any consolation unto thee, in the end, that, as thou hast not sinned alone, so thou shalt not be punished alone? what profit hath the

the thief that is going to the place of execution, to see a train of many others bear him company? Is his judgment any whit the softer? or is his comfort any whit the sounder?

72.

Pull up thy spirits, and excite thy self, not onely to do good, but to be chief in doing good, but to labour, like *S. Paul*, more abundantly than others (z); Hasten and strive in any good course to run before others, to lead them the way; that thou mayest have the greater and better reward in that great day; The chief and principall in any good work that draw on and encourage others in the way of godlyness by their earnest example, their reward, no doubt, shall be exceeding great, they shall have a chief and principall compensation; the wages shall be sure to be according to the works.

[z] 1 Cor. 15. 10.

73.

ADmire not all the sayings and doings of worshipfull & wealthy men; Neither think that all that have power and titles are surely wise; but rather more especially pray for them, that they may be wise; for it is good, yea necessary for them, who have gotten the greatest inheritances, to get the greatest wisdom; that will make their possessions yet better, and that will bring them to a better use of their possessions, that will incite them to prayer, and thankfulness; that will moove them to compassion and mercy, and make them able and ready to exercise every good duty in their calling: As on the other side their wealthyness, without wisdom, will be a ginne and temptation to lewdness, and but as a sword in a madd mans hand.

74.

LEt not the dew of Heaven, and the ſtore of the Earth become ſnares unto thee and occaſions of falling; If thou be hedged about with outward bleſſings, and God have given thee great abundance to enjoy; If riches increaſe, though by never ſo honeſt means, though never ſo well gotten, or well ſaved, or well imployed; yet truſt not in them, boaſt not of them, ſet not thy heart upon them: ſet thy eyes and hands and marks and ſeals upon them, but not thy heart, at leaſt ſettle not thy heart upon them; ſettle that wholy and ſoly upon God; ſettle not the leaſt piece of it upon any other delight whatſoever; God loveth indeed a broken heart, as the Pſalmiſt ſaith (a); but not broken into pieces between him and the world, but a wounded heart he meanes, lanced and torn with anguiſh for ſins, becauſe it is guilty of much undutifull, and offenſive carriage towards God.

[a] Pſal. 51. 17.

75.

75

SEarch not so much after pedegrees, as after piety, which is the chiefest ornament of a Christian; Neither respect so much first and noble birth in the world, as second and new birth in Christ; what is the best bloud worth without the best belief? what boots it to be well descended, if thou be ill disposed? to be before others in greatness, if thou be behind them in grace? what avail ancient progenitors without answerable duties and goodness according? what shall it profit thee to come of nobles according to the flesh, if thou nothing resemble them in the Spirit? He is Noble who is the Child of God, who is born from above he is honorable, being son to a King, brother to a King, *Heb.* 2. 11. heire to a King, *Rom.* 8. 17. yea to the King of glory, *Psal.* 24. 7. to the King of all Kings higher than the highest, *Eccles. Iast.* 5. 7. If thou esteem true nobility, labour by faith to be engrafted into Christ,

and

and to be inveſted into the vertues of a Chriſtian; to have thy name written in the book of life, and to be reckoned in the rowl of the righteous; At this let all thy practice, let all thy pleaſure levell at this; ſo ſhalt thou be certain to attain that bleſſing, of which thou canſt not ſay how much thou doſt attain; ſo ſhalt thou be made both an heire of the earth, and have a title of inheritance in heaven.

76.

DIſdain not thoſe that are moſt neerly linked and allied unto thee, though never ſo mean; but let kinred perſwade and procure kindneſs; but ſuccour them and befriend them, whereinſoever thou mayeſt do them good; as the Law of nature teacheth, and Chriſtian duty bindeth; count them not a blemiſh to thy blood, nor a burden to thy ſtate, the one argues thy ſcornfulnes, the other thy miſerableneſs; Diſdain rather the curſed condition of thoſe monſters in nature,

ſo viſible daily before our faces, who being in place and power exalted, warme and well furniſhed with all comforts, yet not only affect their own fleſh and blood leaſt, and moſt unnaturally prefer ſtrangers before them, but herein worſe than Heathen and Savages, can ſee and ſuffer without compaſſion, their neereſt allies by nature to abide wants, and indure extremities.

77.

KNow thy place, and maintaine the honour of thy place, but by diſcretion, not by diſdaine; but by making a juſt and meek account of others, if thou wouldſt be had in account by others; For otherwiſe every one doth beare a Kingdom in his breaſt; howſoever his outward obedience or reverence may be wreſted from him; Remember that thy neighbours body was framed out of the ſame duſt, and his ſoul breathed into him by the ſame God, as thine was; conſider that you were both redeemed with the ſame price, are

ſubject

subject to the same law, and belong to the same master, and yet all that is not all the relation between you; but you are much neerer yet, even members of the same mysticall body, whereof Christ Jesus is the head; yea members one of another. Be thy place therefore never so high, yet look not upon thy inferiours with so great strangeness, as if the ey had never seen the foot, or the heart never known the leggs.

78.

LOve not any worldly blessing too much, of what account soever it be, lay it not too neer thy heart, take not too much comfort and delight in it; love it with unfeignedness, but not with unmeasurableness; Thou holdest it but at the will and pleasure of the great and high Landlord of all the world; what knowest thou how soon it may be taken away? May not the true and absolute owner of all the good things thou enjoyest do what he wil with his own? So love it, that thou

desire not to part with it, if God so please; yet so love it, that thou canst be content to part with it, if God so please.

79.

GEt heavenly graces, which make their possessours the better, rather than earthly riches, which often make men worse; and seek to be furnished inwardly, more than outwardly; what though thy greatnes vanish? thy maintenãce decrease? thy strength decay? thy friends forsake thee? (as what in this world is not mutable?) what though all worldly things remaining cannot secure thy heart from griefs, and fears, from troubles and vexations? or from thy adversaries violent pursuings and villanous practices? (as in such cases, like *Jobs* friends, what miserable comforters are they commonly found?) yet thy godlinesse, thy wisedom, thy love, thy humility, thy mercy, patience, gentlenes, temperance, and the like, will abide with thee, and stand to thee,

and

and ſuffer no miſery to ſeize upon thee.

80.

BE not like thoſe gormandizers, thoſe ſlaves to their appetites, whoſe God is their belly and whoſe felicity is meat, and drink; but retain temperance, and ſoberneſs, and diſcretion in thy repaſts; live not to eat and drink, but eat and drink to live; that thy body may not faint in the middeſt of neceſſary dutyes; that thou mayeſt be the better able to imploy thy ſelf in thy vocation; Feed thy body to ſerve, and not to rule, to obey, and not to lead the Spirit. leſt (as we alſo ſay of fire, water, and money) of a bad ſervant it prove a worſe maſter; Full meals make foggy minds, and fat bodyes make lean ſouls.

81.

IF thou deſire and hope for Gods bleſſing upon thy own labours defraud not any other any way of the fruit of his labours; Reſtrain thy

heart from coveting, thy eyes from desiring, thy hands from handling, thy house from holding other mens substance, lest whilst thou likest that which belongeth by just right to thy neighbour, thou lose for ever that which is thine own; lest, if thou reap where another hath sown, another thresh that which thou hast reaped.

82.

WHatsoever bad practices now adayes are every where to be seen; How soever some closely thrive like motes in books and garments, by others losses; and some openly make no scruple, to take bread by force out of other mens mouths; corrade not possessions, lands, or revenews, by sacrilege, treason, depredation, plundering, oppression, stealth, or fraud, or by any indirect and unwarrantable dealing: Make stay of purloyning goods unjustly; but make no stay of discharging thy hands justly of them; Enrich not thy self by the spoyl of others,

thers; nor fill thy house with the furniture of iniquity, lest thou fill it also with the vengeance of God, which is the reward of iniquity. Live, and give of thy own substance, which thou hast gotten by lawfull means, though never so mean; It is better vertuously to want, than viciously to abound; There is more comfort in a little honestly gotten, and heartily given, than in great riches and incomes of the wicked, and mighty, that carry with them Gods marks, and curses, being wrongfully obtained, and wilfully retained.

Καλῶς πένεσθαι ἄμεινον ἢ πλουτεῖν κακῶς.

83.

CAst not conscience over-board, though it be to reach the port of the greatest worldly contentment; Let not present gladsomness abolish all thought of future happiness; Account this world but an Inne to lodge in, not an house to dwell in; Alwayes prepare for removing, here is no place for remaining.

84.

MAny would be at the rich mans table in this world, and in *Abrahams* bosome in another; Many would be *Demas* while they live, and *Paul* when they are dead; but that thou mayest be in *Abrahams* bosome, and with *Paul*, at thy death, Be not a *Dives*, be not a *Demas* whilst thou livest; He that lives ill seldom dyes well, but he whose life is good, his death is sure not to be bad (*b*).

[b] *Non potest malè mori, qui benè vixit, & vix potest benè mori, qui malè vixit.* Aug. de D. & Christi.

85.

IN buying of truth, and heavenly matters, offer not slowly, or niggardly, be not too base a bidder; but in worldly wares and earthly commodities, be not too franck a chapman; part not with the fear of God, and faith in his providence, for vanity of vanities and only vanity; pay not too dear for wealth though thou win it, or for preferments though thou purchase them; com-

pass

paſs not any thing with diſturbing of thy conſcience, or deſtroying of thy ſoul.

86.

WHat though the common conceit preſume, that if a man thrive in the world then God loves him; and, if he be croſſed in outward things, then God hates him? yet meaſure not the favour and love of God towards thy ſelf, or others, by proſperity, or adverſity; If thou wouldſt find comfort in thy heart and unfeigned teſtimonies of Gods ſpeciall reſpect towards thee, ſeek not for them in outward benefits, or in want of outward benefits; (both which are common to the godly and ungodly) but in joy in the holy Ghoſt, in remiſſion of ſins, in repentance from dead works, in the Spirit of adoption, in faith in Chriſt, in peace of conſcience, which paſſeth all underſtanding; As for other things place not thy heaven or happineſs in them, for they afford no ſuch aſſurance; If bleſſings come receive them thankfully,

fully; If crosses happen indure them cheerfully.

87.

COnform thy fashions to thy fare, thy manners to thy means, our severall conditions require severall carriages; If thou be tryed with adversity bear it without stubbornes, or impatiency; If thou be called to prosperity, use it without insolency, or ingratitude; Debase thy self in the one as God hath debased thee, and take no more state upon thee in the other than he hath given thee; Let not thy mind be so reflective upon thy degree in the world, as upon thy conscience; but especially remember always the Judge of thy conscience; who as in his mercy he hath lifted thee up, so in his wisedom can bring thee down; or, as in his wisedom he hath brought thee down, so in his mercy can lift thee up.

88.

88.

DIſable not thy ſelf from being in the ſtate of bleſſedneſs, for the life to come, becauſe thou art in great miſery in this life; yea though thou be juſtly puniſhed for thy ſins, for the which thou art not yet ſufficiently penitent; Thou ſhalt but add to thy ſorrows, and needleſly increaſe the weight of thy burden, if thou condemn thy ſtate of election, becauſe the Lord hath elected thee to chaſtiſe thee for thy faults; if thou relinquiſh thy hope of happineſs in heaven, becauſe thou art recompenſed with judgments on earth; yea therefore are not Gods Children free from all manner of temporall plagues, that they may be free from everlaſting perdition; A man may be ſealed by the holy Spirit of God unto the day of redemption (c); A man may be as ſecure from hell, as Sathan is ſecluded from heaven, and yet his calamities may make him groan, and cry, and roar all the day long;

(c) Ephes. 4. 30.

and

and yet day and night Gods hand may be heavy upon him (*d*).

[*d*] Psal. 32. 3, 4.

89.

BY deliverance from troubles past, assure thy self of deliverance from dangers present, and by former benefits never doubt of future favour, in Gods good time, so far forth as it may stand with thy spirituall good; God loveth not, as men do, for a day, or two, and so farewell, but it was, it is, and it will be alwayes true, God is the Lord, he changeth not: whom he once loveth, he loveth to the end; and where he hath once shewed mercy, he will persevere in kindness; being yesterday, to day, and the same for ever (*e*). When *Saul* told *David* that he was but a youth, and therefore too weak to combat with that strong *Goliah* the champion of the *Philistins*, who had been a man of warr from his youth; How soundly and comfortably did *David* reason from the experience he had in times past of Gods helping hand, that

[*e*] Heb. 13. 8. *Idem Objectivè Subjectivè Effectivè.*

that he who had delivered him from the paw of the Bear, and the jaw of the Lyon, would also save him in that duell which he was to undertake with an uncircumcised *Philistin* that defied and oppressed the people of God (*f*)? And how cheerfully did *Saint Paul* make the same argument, that God did deliver him, doth deliver him and hereafter will deliver him assuredly (*g*)?

[*f*] 1 Sam. 17. 34, 35, 36.

[*g*] 2 Tim. 4. 17, 18.

90.

TAke up and bear the yoak of poverty with patience; poverty is no sin; nor alwayes onely the punishment of sin; Even Christ the Lord of heaven and earth, even the Lord of all hast, lead of all, and could say, The Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head; shewing, that as he was the Son of Man, the beasts & fowls were richer than he; he was poorer than the beasts & the birds. Art thou without this worlds goods? yet be not without Christian courage; God oftentimes re-

[*b*] Matth. 8. 20.

compen-

compenſeth the want of earthly bleſſings, with great abundance of heavenly graces; ſuch gifts in the day of trouble, and in the hour of temptation, ſhall miniſter more comfort, and more true peace unto thee, than all things which begin with pleaſure, and end with corruption.

91.

HOwſoever thou canſt chalenge nothing at Gods hands, as due debt unto thee, but calamities and ſorrowes, which are the fruit of thy ſins; yet know this, that God often protecteth thee from much harm which thou knoweſt not of; Cõſider often with all humbleneſs & thankfulneſs, that God not only foreſeeth thy dangers before they can come neer thee, but preſerveth thee from many a miſchief, and much affliction, which through blindneſs and ignorance thou neither do'ſt nor can'ſt perceive; How much more then will he ſupport thee, when thou knoweſt thy ſelf to be in trouble, and powreſt out thy earneſt

prayers

prayers unto him, for deliverance out of trouble? He that performeth the greater will alwayes be ready to accompliſh the leſs; He that keepeth thee back from the pit that was hidden, will help thee to eſcape from that which lieth open; He that is ſo forward to help thee when he is not requeſted, will not be backward to ſuccour thee when he is intreated.

92.

IN thy greateſt affliction and moſt grievous extremity, be thy wants never ſo great, thy means of eaſe never ſo ſmall; be thy hopes in reſpect of outward helps never ſo few, the difficulties through which thou muſt paſs, never ſo many; Regard not ſo greatly the things that are ſeen (which may work deadly diſcouragement and anguiſh) as that which is not ſeeen with mortall ey, namely Gods omnipotence; Look not ſo much to the danger of death before thee, as to the power of God above thee, which is never at a ſtand, never at a loſs; which then

begins

begins to shew it self when human help ends (*i*); when mens cases seem most desperate, and help is thought to be furthest of, then is Gods mercy greatest, and his presence neerest, then is his power made perfect through our weakness. When doth the Devill and his children more insult, than when they have men under? but when men are most miserable, then doth God shew most mercy; when faith was enfeebled by long looking, and hope began to faint with much watching, when the burdens were increased, and the straw was taken away, then came *Moses* (*k*); when the *Israelits* were hedged in on either side with mountains, when they had the Sea before them, and the *Egyptians* marching behind them, and there appeared no way, no remedy, no hope of subterfuge in the sight of man, when *Moses* warrant might seem now to express rather a dream of desolation, than a day of deliverance, Then did the Lord cause the Sea to part in two, and stand like walls on the right hand

[i] *ubi desinit humanum auxilium ibi incipit divinum.*

[k] Exod. 14. 20.

hand and on the left, till the *Israelites* had passed over on dry land; and when *Pharao* followed he made them joyne againe, and drowned him and all his; Then did God (oh admire both his might and his mercy) save his servants and destroy their enemies (*l*), to the terrour of all those that shall persecute the Church of God and his people.

[*l*] Exod. 14. 30.

93.

SEest thou a man in distress, in troubles, crosses, dangers? If thou knowest him not, censure him not, censure not his manners by his misery, remembring and considering that neither all wicked men are so punished, nor all so punished are wicked men; I meane wicked above others: By prophaneness judge of calamities, not by calamities of prophaneness.

94.

MUrmur not in troubles, storm not in afflictions, as many do;

do; knowing, from whom they come, and to whom they oft'nest come, better than many do; Do'st thou know they come from God, & dareſt thou once repine? Do'st thou know how the like are accompliſhed in all the Saints which are, or have been, or ſhall be in the world, and dareſt thou look to be ſpared? who in theſe thoughts would grudge that his caſe is no better, and not rather comfort himſelf that it is no worſe? who would not reſt contented with that, which is the pleaſure of his Father, and the portion of all his brethren?

95.

IN all thy afflictions, howſoever ſuppullulating one after another, and exceeding each other in degrees, briſtle not up thy affections againſt the pleaſure or proceeding of the Almighty, whoſe judgments thou haſt ſo many times deſerved; Look not ſo much upon thy ſorrowes, as upon thy ſins; and freely acknowledge that not only in that manner,

manner, but in a greater measure God might justly punish thee; He might plague thee more severely because thou art sinfull; but he punisheth thee mildly because he is mercifull, because his judgments are alwayes mingled with mercy, because his justice and goodness go still together.

96.

AS God chastiseth thee, because he loveth thee, because he would separate from thee that which he misliketh, the dross of thy corruptions, as gold is fined in the fornace; so love thou him because he chastiseth thee; There is no surer signe of thy having the spirit of patience, and of thy being translated from death to life, than when his mercy bringeth forth fear in thee, and his justice love; He loveth the party heartily, that can love him when he wrongeth him; & (though God can do us no wrong) He loveth God unfeignedly, that can love him when he scourgeth him.

97.

WHatsoever Sathan often suggests to men beset and encompassed with any trouble, conclude not the estate of the wicked to be the better, because they live for the present in pleasure and prosperity; Neither esteem the condition of the godly to be the worse, because they abide for a while under adversity. For if the gold must pass the furnace, shall not the dross be rejected? If the good corn must be ground in a rough Mill, and baked in a hot oven, before it become good bread, shall not the chaff be burned up with fire unquenchable? Conflicts, and cares, fightings without, and fears within (*m*), The outward and inward molestations of good men do not bring them behind the wicked, but rather shew that the sufferings and sorrowes of the wicked are yet behind.

[*m*] 2 Cor. 7. 5.

98.

IF thou ſeeſt any mourn more than is meet, or more impatient than thou haſt commonly ſeen, for the loſs of their yoak-fellowes, or children, brethren or kinred; more weakly complaining that they are gon, than wiſely conſidering whether they are gon; Yet caſt them not off with thy uncharitable cenſures, leſt thou condemn the righteous with the wicked; but bear a part of their burdens, upon thy Chriſtiſtian counſels, and comforts, and contribution (if thou be able, and they want it) or at the leaſt upon thy prayers, that they with thee, and thou with them, like feeling members of the ſame infirmities, may ſuſtain your croſſes by your mutuall ſupplications, and obtain your aſſiſtance by the precious blood of your bleſſed Saviour.

99.

BE not willing to sin, nor unwilling to suffer for sin; Be not impatient if God punish thee a little, when thou hast provok'd him much; but be drawn and driven by it, neerer unto God, and unto his Word; but humble thy self with thankfulness, under the mighty hand of God, that out of his great indulgence his afflicting of thee is tolerable; that he doth not exercise that extremity upon thee, which he justly might; and ingennously confess with holy *Jeremy*, that it is of the Lords mercyes (that it ariseth from the abundance of his favour that thou art suffered still to enjoy the benefit of life) that thou art not (utterly) consumed (*n*), that thou art not, according to thy deserts, strucken dead upon a sudden for thy transgressions.

[n] Lament. 3. 22.

100.

ART thou troubled, and grieved, vexed, and oppreſſed, with changes, and armyes of ſorrowes? Doth thy heart in the judgment of fleſh ſo faint within thee, with pinching fear and penſive heavineſs, that, knowing not how much thou art able to bear by the mediation and ſtrength of CHRIST, thou thinkeſt thou canſt no longer hold out, unleſs God help thee by ſuch a ſeaſon? Now what is the wiſeſt man, that he ſhould preſume to aſſigne unto the only wiſe God his ſtemming? Is it meet that man ſhould direct God, as if it were his duty to miniſter to him, or as if there wanted diſcretion in him to know when to meaſure out his favours? Doth not the governour of all the world beſt diſcerne his own opportunities, as for juſtice and judgment, ſo for mercy and compaſſion? It is good (ſaith the Prophet) that a man ſhould both

hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord (o); prescribe not unto the Lord the time of thy deliverance, but patiently leave it to his determination; Fit not the time to thy self, but fit thy self to the time that he hath appointed.

[o] Lament. 3. 26.

APHO-

APHORISMS, OR, BREVIATS, of Speculations.

THE SECOND CENTURIE.

1.

HAving sincerly prepared, and devoutly disposed thy self, according to thy skil, and power, (for how dare any man speak to Almighty God without premeditation?) Be not out of

out of heart, or hope, but make thy addresses in the Name of Jesus, to the Throne of Grace, with an humble confidence and holy cheerfulness; Let thy prayers proceed from a lively faith against all faintness, from a stirring zeal against all slackness, from a stedfast indurance against all weariness; what though the Lord grant thee not at first? yet he will at last; what though he grant thee not at all that same thing which thou desirest? He will give thee as good a blessing, or a better.

2.

GIve not over thy prayers, though not presently heard, but with faith, and perseverance, crave, and with hope, and patience, expect Gods grace, and mercy, to help in due and convenient time; Be thy wound never so deep, thou art not past help, so long as thou art not past desire to be holpen; who art thou, or what merit canst thou allege that therefore thy sute ought to receive a present dispatch? what knowest

knoweſt thou for what reaſons God putteth thee off? perhaps not intending utterly to deny thee, but for ſundry main and important cauſes; we tarry mans pleaſure, and wait upon him after many petitions; where then is Gods honour? why not wait much longer and willinger upon God? who both knoweth our need, and when it is moſt meet to ſupply it, better than our neereſt friends, better than we our ſelves; and never faileth or forſaketh thoſe who unfeignedly put their truſt in him; who will be ſure to do in the end that which ſhall be moſt for our good, and his own glory.

3.

NEglect not Prayer under any pretence, though never ſo plauſible, no, not under pretence of Gods knowing and underſtanding all things, or of his power enabling thee to do all things, or of his providence determining all things; but know that Almighty God hath commanded prayer as an inſtrument

ment of continuall use, profitable for all things; for the performance of all those things which he hath promised, and appointed; He hath ordained many other means to bring his purposes to passe, but none more excellent than prayer, which procureth a blessing upon all the rest, and without the which the rest cannot prevail.

4.

When thou prayest for the forgiveness of thy sins, as thou art daily bound to do, thou plainely confessest, that thou art not able to satisfie for them; that there can be no satisfaction made to Gods Justice for sins by our works: How then canst thou supererogate, as some teach and believe? How then can the worthiness of thy deserts be so great, that doing God more service than can be sufficiently rewarded in thy own person, thou canst deserve heaven, not only to thy self, but for others too? How then canst thou have an overplus of works, or

the

the measure of thy works running over, which may be disposed or sold (if he will liberally come off with his coin) to the spiritual benefit of another, which may go for payment of thy fellowes transgressions, when thou hast not enough to supply thy own necessity?

5.

HOw earnestly soever thou pray, against the pride, malice, and all the devices of the wicked, that God will not suffer their actions to prosper, lest they more and more offend; yet still pray for the offendors, that God may open their eyes, that they may come to see the truth, love it, and imbrace it; yet without exception of persons, remember still to pray for the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the working of the Spirit upon all; upon the godly that they may be confirmed, upon the ungodly that they may be converted.

6.

6.

WHen thou art about to take rest, and knowest not what a night or an houre may bring forth, and knowest not whether thou shalt ever work or wake again, or no; ly not down in thy bed, as a dog lyeth down in a kennell, or a swine in his sty, or an oxe in his stall, without any prayer, any ejaculation, any good motion to Godward; but commit thy self, thy soul, thy body, thy goods, thy brethren, into Gods hand, as a most faithfull keeper; but remember and consider, that God is nigh thee, both in his essence, whereby he filleth heaven, and earth, and in his presence, whereby he beholdeth thy heart, and all thy courses, watching what thou do'st; He is about thy paths and about thy bed, and spieth out all thy wayes (*a*); To him not onely the light is light, but darkness is light; both the light and the night to him are all one in clearness (*b*); He therefore, that will rise

[*a*] Psal. 139. 3.

[*b*] Psal. 139. 11, 12.

riſe in his favour, muſt ly down in his feare.

7.

HOwſoever worldly men, who ſavour nothing but of the earth, who ſee nothing but with fleſhly eyes, are unable to behold the beauty of the Church, and therfore account it no part of their happineſs, to live within the compaſs and boſome of it; yet eſteem it thou more excellent and precious than all other ſocieties in the world; and with humbleſt thankfulneſs conſider, how highly thou art bound to God, that thou art made a free denizen of ſo glorious a Corporation; yea prefer alwayes the good condition of Gods Church before all concernments of thine own; In the welfare thereof moſt joy, In the wrong thereof moſt grieve; Let naturall affections move thee much, but let ſpirituall affections ſway thee more; ſo many cogitations of the diſtreſſed eſtate of the Church, ſo many teares and prayers for her; Let thy zeal to her evidence thy

right

right in her; Thou canst not get a better argument or surer witness to thy own heart of being ingraffed into that body, whereof Christ Jesus is the head, of having the life of Christianity, and being possessed with the love of godliness, than the having a sensible feeling of the Churches distress, and a sincere and zealous affection and respect to the common good of religion, and the Churches prosperous estate.

8.

MArvell not if wicked men get advantage but too soon, and prosper but too well; if such as have no fear of God before their eyes have their projects in some degree performed, and their presumptions in part pleased; if the violent tread down the vertuous, and might now & then overcome right; Be not dismayed if the publick enemies sometimes prevail and get the upper hand against the Church, God giveth not alwayes victory for favour, or overthrow for displeasure,

ſure, but for ſome other ends; to raiſe the wicked, that their fall may be the greater (x); to rowſe his own, that their faith may be the ſtronger.

(c) --tolluntur in altum ut lapſu graviore ruant. Claudian.

9.

IF thou be not fit to profit the Church or Commonwealth, by thy perſon, yet ſeek the good of both of them by thy Prayer; that they may indure, and flouriſh, and increaſe, and not be overthrown and ſuppreſſed by thoſe that ſo cruelly ſeek, not their reformation, and converſion, but ſubverſion and utter undoing; that peace and plenteouſneſs, and holineſs and righteouſneſs may be alwayes with them, and the free and publick uſe of the Goſpell; that ſuch notable and rare men, as are wiſe in politick affaires, as are indued with all gifts and qualities fit for States-men, may be put in place, held in grace, and have imployment, and they which are ſo imployed may ſhew themſelves faithfull, and they which

which are faithfull may also be prosperous in effecting their purposes, so a lay-man may become a beneficiall Church-man, so a private person may do good service to his soveraigne, and all within the precincts of his jurisdiction.

10.

IT is not onely not orderly, but very odious, for mean men to pry too far into the counsels or practices of Princes; of which for want both of knowledge, and warrant, they are not meet to be judges: It is his protestation that had the holy Ghost, that his heart was not haughty, nor his eyes lofty, neither did he exercise himself in great matters, or in things too high for him; but he behaved and quieted himself as a child that is weaned of his mother (*d*); But art thou therefore free from regarding any publick affaires? Is there no kind of inquiring after them required of thee, being a private man? Now be thou never so meane, yet art thou bound both

[*d*] Psal. 131. 1, 2.

in duety and wiſdom (as far as thou canſt by good means attain unto it) to inform thy ſelf of ſtates-matters, that are not impertinent unto thee; not out of meer curioſity, like the heathen *Athenians*, whoſe eares itched after ſtrange and new reports; who gave themſelves to little els, to nothing els (as too many do now) but to hear, and tell newes; but the better to direct thy prayers, according to the occurrences both for State and Church; Not out of envy to either, Not out of a plotting humor how to diſpoſe of the Scepter; but out of an earneſt deſire that the Scepter may rightly diſpoſe of thee, and thine, being aſſured that Princes are fingers of that great hand that governeth all the world.

II.

HOwſoever the perſecutors of theſe times pretend piety, and the deſtroyers boaſt of devotion; Howſoever they bear themſelves in hand, or would make others beleeve, that they are the onely chil-

dren of God, and truly religious; yet never think them truly reconciled to God, who hate or wrong any of his servants; He that loveth not his brother abideth in death, whosoever hateth his brother is a murtherer, and ye know that no murtherer hath eternall life abiding in him (*e*); They that are reconciled to God against whom they formerly contended, and are at variance with sin with whom they formerly conjoined, cannot but be sound and kind and peaceable and and favourable towards all those who are sins foes, and Gods followers.

[*e*] 1 John 3. 14, 15.

12.

BElieve not all those seeming *sanctificeturs*, who count zeal superstition, and dutifull adoration idolatry, those who detest the errours of Popery, who loath to be accounted Papists; and would take it as a great injury done them to be so termed, for many such now adayes if we weigh their practices, live more like unto Atheists!

theists: conceive not all those to be truly righteous who cry out against idolatry, who would think themselves greatly slandered to be reputed worshippers of a false God, for many such in these times, if we look to their fruits, are found rather to worship no God at all.

13.

ACcount it not enough to keep thy self from idols, or to abhor Idols, if thou keep not thy self from sacrilege, and coveting of goods set apart to holy use; for els thou runnest but from one rock unto another, from loving the false God, to the spoyling of the true God, which seemeth to be much worse than the worshipping of Images, and giving our selves to the [illegible] idolatry.

14.

TAke heed and beware of covetousnes, saith our Saviour (f); as if he had said, it is a subtill Ser-

(f) Luke 12. 15.

pent, it assaulteth secretly, it entereth like a friend, it hath pretences many and fair; but how much more then hadst thou need to beware of sacrilege, which is a fruit of extreme covetousnes, and which is the main engine the Devill hath to overthrow the Churches; If thou hast never been sacrilegious, pray God thou never mayest; If thou hast, add not thirst unto drunkennes, wallow not in the mire any more, labour to get pardon in the merits and glorious righteousnes of Jesus Christ; repent, restore, ask mercy, and never be sacrilegious again. It was a meek and pious resolution of *Elihu*, one of *Jobs* friends, If I have done wickedly, I will do no more (*g*); will many a mean Christian rather starve than steal? then will a constant convert, a resolute [illegible]our, say, I will begg, I will starve, I will rather dy, than be sacrilegious; for the which sin the wrath of God shall surely demolish all my other estate; and I in mine, or and mine, be sure to come to ruine

[g] Job 34. 32.

Acts

Achan dreamed of a golden day when he had gotten a goodly *Babylonish* garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, which should have been all delivered into the Lords treasury, which God had set apart for himself, and would not have converted to the private profit of any; He thought to have been rich upon a sudden, He thought to have benefited himself and his children for ever by so brave a booty; but it fell out to his own destruction, and the destruction of all that belonged unto him; but he with all his were stoned with stones, and burned with fire for his labour (*b*). [*b*] Joshua 7. 24, 25.

15.

THe name of a traitour is most odious amongst all men, heathens (*i*), as well as Christians; no man can abide to be so accounted; Beware then especially that thou be not a traitour to God, by unfruitfull purloining, and obstinate detaining any thing that is [*i*] *Cicer. Catil. 4. Valer. Max. lib. 9. Tacit. Annal. lib. 1.*

his:

his: It is a vain thing to say thou thou art not a traitour, thou hatest the very name of treason, if thou nourishest open rebellion against God who is the King of Kings; such as lard their leaner revenews with fat collops sacrilegiousle cut out of the sides or flanks of the Church, such as perpetually defraud God of his revenews, his tithes and offerings, and peremptorily live upon his dues and ancient demeanes, are without question rank traitors, and we need crave no pardon if we boldly avouch and aver them to be children of rebellion; Neither yet if we say, that (if we consider them unpassionately) *Theudas* and *Judas* of *Galilee* (*k*) shall be justified as no rebells in comparison.

[*k*] Act. 5. 36, 37.

16.

THink not (with the new-fangled in these dayes) that the abuse of things ought alwayes to take away the use: that every thing abused by wicked men is therefore not

to

to be uſed by ſober men; for then the Sun, the Moon, and the Starrs ſhould be pulled out of heaven, in as much as the whole hoſt of heaven hath been worſhipped as Gods (*l*); Then the holy Scriptures muſt be forſaken which the tempter abuſed, and holy prayers which the Phariſees abuſed, and the holy Sacraments, Baptiſm and the Lords Supper, which the *Corinthians* abuſed; Then Civill converſation of life and holy Chriſtian exerciſes, reading, meditation, conference, faſting, almes, ſhould be caſt off and deteſted, becauſe falſe Prophets have abuſed them, and do ſtill abuſe them to deceive the people of God, and lead them into errour, to colour and countenance all their crafts and conveiances of corrupt doctrine; Then men muſt abhor their meat and drink becauſe ſome be drunken, and ſome ſurfet; Then muſt our witts, memories, health, ſtrength, be taken away, becauſe every part, and the whole man, hath been miſerably abuſed by us all, through our many, and manifold tranſgreſſions.

[*l*] Deut. 4. 19. Jer. 7. 18.

17.

17.

BE not so unadvised as to malice or utterly mislike any lawfull vocation, because the professors, or practisers of it demeane themselves unworthily or impiously; This or that officer may be hurtfull, and yet his office still may be usefull; was not *Bennaiah* the son of *Jehoiada* put over the Host in *Joabs* room, and in the room of *Abiathar*, *Zadock* the Priest (*m*)? Did not *Eliakim* a faithfull and diligent man succeed *Shebna* the hypocrite, in the stewardship of *Ezechiahs* house (*n*)? what a monster amongst men was *Judas*? a traitour to his Master, a murderer to himself, censured by Christ to be no less debauched than a Devill (*o*); And yet it is not said of him, let the Bishoprick be taken away, Let there be no more Bishopricks for *Judas* his sake: but let the Bishoprick remain; and let another take (*p*) it that deserveth it better, who will not onely bear the name, but discharge the trust, and more rightly perform the imployment.

[*m*] 1 Kieg. 2. 35.

[*n*] Isaiah. 22. 20.

[*o*] John 6. 70.

[*p*] Acts 1. 20.

18

18.

DOth the world commonly like earneſtnes in any thing rather than religion? Is that ancient and heavenly fire, which once appeared moſt worthily in many, both in their entrance, and progreſs, of their good courſe of piety, and a good conſcience, now turned to aſhes, and extinct; or doth it burne ſo cloſely and feebly, that it can hardly be diſcerned? yet keep thy ſpirit, thy forwardnes, and heat of heart, and be not at any time without zeal in the ſervice of God. It well becommeth every Saint to be earneſt, to ſtick cloſe to thoſe holy duetties which God hath layd upon him, and not to be flitting off and on, and unſetled, as many are who yet would be taken to be of the forwardeſt ſort. It is good to be zealouſly affected alwayes in a good thing (q); in the practice whereof good zeal with ſmall learning is better than great learning with ſmall zeal; But as knowledge is

(q) Galar. 4. 18.

not

not sufficient without zeal, so neither zeal without knowlege. But let not the most spirituall project be without spirituall prudence, but in thy greatest heate let meek discretion in a proportionable rate order thy zeal; Least unawares thou purchase Gods displeasure by the miscarriage of thy wel-meaning devotion, such as God never appointed, never approved, and such as he hath often both misliked and severely punished; zeal without knowlege is not zeal, but stomack, nor a blessed holiness, but a brainsick giddiness; A brutish and savage passion and perturbation: such as is in that head-strong part of furious persons, whose zeal is to depart from the Church, yea even that Church, that first brought them to that knowledge and faith that they have, if in truth and soundnes they have any at all.

19.

BE sometimes severe to beat down the sin, but commonly kind to winne

winne the ſinner: Be at all times ſerving to befriend, but at no time ſoothing to betray.

20.

MArre not a good cauſe with ill handling, meddle not with evill, no not the leaſt, that good, though the greateſt, private, or publick may come thereof; Thou canſt not pleaſe God more with a good intent, than thou mayeſt diſpleaſe him by uſing bad means to effect it.

21.

OBſerve ſtill the dayes worthily ſet apart to give thanks to God for his Apoſtles; for thoſe benefits which he hath beſtowed upon us by their miniſtery; for their eminent graces on earth, and now ſuch unſpeakable glory in heaven; whom though with the Papiſts, we neither do, nor dare adore, yet well may we admire and imitate, and well may we pray God to give us grace to follow them, both in their believing,

believing, living, and dying, who having now by their faith attained that which they desired, are an excellent direction for us, how to seek what they have attained.

22.

NEither habour an ill thought against thy Soveraigne; Neither admit any the least depravation of him, no not in the whispering of thy conscience: No, though he give cause to be evill thought of; No, though thou be wronged or worse thought of than thou deservest. It skilleth not much what his person is, when most sure it is, his power is of God; when of what nation, or nature soever, the Magistrate is, Jew or Gentil, Christian or Heathen, good or bad, he hath his authority from God the Magistrate of all Magistrates; not from the Law of Nations, as some are not ashamed to aver (r), but as from God and his Law. By diligent care in good services please thy governour as well as thou mayest,

[r] *Bellar. de Pontif. Rom. lib. 1. cap. 7. parag. praeterea.*

mayeſt, and that in moſt awfull and loyall manner, and with all due circũſpection beware how thou kindle his anger; Be far from thoſe tumultuous and rebellious practices that may give him cauſe of provocation againſt thee, and keep thy ſelf from thoſe fierce and fiery fellowes, thoſe deſperate or hypocriticall companions, which may ſtir thee up to ſtand upon points with him, and imbolden thee againſt him. From Church-robbers, and traitors, it is not pride, but a point of wiſedom and godly policy, to affect alwayes a ſtern kind of ſtrange-geneſs aloofe; It is *Salomons* injunction, in the giving whereof he was directed by Gods Spirit, and be it ever in thy remembrance, My ſon fear thou the Lord, and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change (*s*); that are deſirous of alteration, and changes, in the ſtate according to their private and peeviſh humours.

[*s*] Prov. 24. 21.

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HOw ardently are wilful hearts enamoured with worldly greatness? How greedily do naturall men affect dominion? How mightily do some men long to Lord it over their neighbours, in honour and dignity, power and authority? some are resolved to rise, and be in some office, or other, or it shall cost them a fall, yea a fall into hell; some had rather be traitours, than not Magistrats: But let us not be desirous of vain glory saith *S. Paul* (*t*); But seek not thou the acclamation of man, more than the approbation of God: Be thou no Magistrate, no officer, yea no man, rather than a traitour.

[t] Gal. 5. 26.

232

IF cunning rebellion under a shew of religion, and vizard of vertue, without fear of Gods vengeance or shame of mens reproof, cast his fiery darts at thee, let faithfull loyalty

ty and loyall faithfulneſs be ready to quench them; If ſeditious perſons, and ſuch as love innovations, ſeek with guilefull ſpeeches to ſteal thy ſoul from God, and thy heart from thy ſoveraigne, let wiſedom ſhape them an anſwer & ſend them packing; Be averſe to follow the mightieſt rebels for all their ſmooth perſwaſions, and ſweet allurements, but more averſe to perſwade and allure others to rebellion; If they ſhall be ſure to ſmart (as without repentance ſurely they ſhall) who rebell by other mens occaſions, how much more ſhall they ſuffer, who are the occaſions or give the occaſions unto others?

25.

BE not refractory to any lawfull authority; Be a diligent obſerver of good orders and good lawes; ſubmit thy ſelf unto ſuperiour powers, procure, according to thy calling, whatſoever it be, the benefit of thy ſoveraign to whom thou art a ſubject, and the profit of the

Church

Church whereof thou art a member.

26.

WHen thou goest about to effect a good work, not only cast how good it is, but consider what warrant thou hast to do it; If it be a generall good duety it belongeth unto thee in particular; but if a speciall practice, thou must have a speciall precept; It is not for private men to reform publick abuses, or to dispose of publick affaires; It is not for one calling to intrude upon another, no more than for one bodily member to usurpe the work of another; what another may not omit without iniquity, thou mayest commit iniquity if thou offer to do it; and that may be for thee a most hainous sin, which may be for another a most holy service.

27.

BE not backward when thou shouldst be zealous, nor forward when thou shouldst be quiet;

Mak

Make not too much haſt with *Balaam* (*u*), nor too little with *Lot's* wife (*w*).

(*u*) Numb. 22. 21.
(*w*) Gen. 19. 26.

28.

MIghteſt thou be freed from ſequeſtration and ſundry other oppreſſions? Mighteſt thou be preferred to offices, and ſundry other favours; wouldſt thou but confer thy ſelf to ſome mens humours, help to ſet up the new ſuperſtition and oppoſe government and all good order? Alas what trifling and temporary baites are theſe? refuſe them, yea deſpiſe them; who, to obtain thoſe profits which nature regardeth, would forſake thoſe duties which the God of Nature requireth? who that hath hope of heaven would not willingly ſuffer any thing that God impoſeth, rather than wilfully do any thing that God deteſteth?

29.

LEt neither love, nor fear, ſteal courage from thy heart, or thy heart from the Lord; Let no ſtormes

of troubles or calmes of pleasure, turn thee back from Christ, or bring thee to deny him, lest thou be denyed of him in his Kingdom; though the Loadstone draw Iron, yet let it not moove gold; though Jeat gather up the light straw, yet let it not take up the pure Steel. Be not mooved, or carried away, as some are, with the various blasphemous errours, and gaudy pious pretences of these times; Let no worldly promises or profits draw thee, or peremptory persecutions drive thee, to forsake thy Lord and Saviour, or to ingage thy self in any apparent sin; what though plunderers have thy goods, or a prison, or worse punishment thy person, yet let God still have thy service, lest the Devill in conclusion have thy Soul.

30.

INcurr not Gods enmity, to increase thy neighbours amity; fall not out with God, to keep in with men; to make thy self acceptable to the one, make not thy self abominable to the other; yield not so to please,

as

as to yield unto sin withall; who would not rather undergo mans injust detestation, than Gods just damnation? Be content to lose the love, & bear the displeasure of the whole world, for the love thou beares to God and his truth; Thou refusest to be in the body, if thou wilt not suffer the hatred of the world with thy head (*x*).

[x] *Recusas esse in corpore si non vis odium mundi sustinere cum capite.* Augustin. 87. tract. in Johan.

31.

LOve thy life, and preserve it by all good means, but love thy faith as thy life, and more than thy life, preserve that whatsoever become of thy life; Be not so desirous of retaining they naturall life, as rather to deny the Truth of God, and forsake the Gospell of Christ, than to make profession thereof, and yield sincere obedience to it, with hazard and perill; He which choseth to forgo life, rather than the services of God, and a good conscience, shal keep it to eternall life, be saved & glorified for ever; without which hope, if any man with al his skil could get al the world into his hands, and order all things every

where according to his own pleasure, what were it available?

32.

REjoice under the cross, and be glad when thou sufferest for the truth; let the cause, for which thou suffrest, more comfort thee, than the trouble that thou indurest dismay thee; shew thy cheerfull obedience in suffering, as well as in doing, the will of God: Christ our blessed Saviour, the most perfect pattern of obedience, performed his part both wayes, both by doing and suffering; And what is the substance of the Gospell, but to declare to all people, what he did, and what he suffered?

33.

NEither rashly thrust thy self into any needless affliction, nor cowardly desert thy station; true faith is neither bare-headed, nor bird-witted, neither fool-hardy, nor faint-hearted; but when necessity requireth, and duty designeth, it refuseth

seth not any dangers be they never so great, with a trust and hope to glorify God, both in life and death.

34.

THou art not bound wilfully to cast thy self into the mouths of devouring and ravening persecutors; but never deny the Truth of God, nor thy self to be a professour of it, if thou be called in question for it; Not only believe confidently, but confess cheerfully, whensoever occasion is offered justly; for otherwise thou goest not beyond the Devills, whose faith is equivocall, and their confession forced, who believe God is, but believe not in him, and confess Christ, not of love, but of constraint.

35.

ART thou controlled, reviled, and sequestred from thy share in the world? Know that it is not without a providence; acknowledge the Judgments of God, often secret, but ever just, sequester, thy self yet

further from all those vaine worldly delights, wherein some place their chiefest happiness; and live, as it were, carryed up in regard of those wayes of licentiousness, wherein others walk: Bind thy self to the good behaviour, and apply thy self more closely, and more constantly to God; As the Prophet *David* when he was vexed by unexpected enemies, when he had complained that his friend and companion (*y*) rose up against him, he gave himself unto prayer; and again, when for his love he found adversaries, where did he fly but unto God for comfort (*z*)?

(*y*) Psal. 55. 16.

(*z*) Psal. 142.

36.

BEstow not thy blood on schism or heresy, it is a foolish death where the cause is foul; canst thou be content to suffer? be sure it be in a good cause; either for God who knoweth all, or for that which thou knowest in thine own conscience to be well pleasing to God; Suffer not either out of fashion or out of fashion, either as ambitious of honour,

or

or to satisfy thy malignant humour; for such suffering can neither merit thanks of God, nor praise of men; *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousnes sake* (a); not for superstition, self-will, and singularity, but for righteousnes sake; our sufferings are no argument of our righteousnes, but our righteousnes an ornament of our sufferings (b). A red colour is not beautifull if it be not grounded on a fair white; The paine hath no grace if the suffering have no truth; where the faith is not true, there is no true Martyrdom.

(a) Matth. 5. 10.

(b) *Non ex passione certa est justitia sed ex justitia passio gloriosa est.* Aug. cont. epi. Parmen. lib. 1. cap. 7.

(37)

DElight not in brawles and controversies, which are easily begun, not so soon ended; seek no credit by opposition, pick no quarrells, nor desire to fall out with any man; strive not at any time, though never so meekly, but when a just necessity presseth thee to stir; when sin is not to be connived at, but contended against; when the truth is not to be forsaken but contended for;

for; when thou canst not undergo the wrong without great damage to thy estate, nor otherwise but by that course in joy thy right.

38.

IF thou knowest not how to pacify man, to bring him to a firm and unfeigned reconciliation, to obtain, and in joy a sound and well-grounded peace with him, seek more and more to be at amity with God, to appease and please the Lord by thy holy obedience to his Commandements; Hide Gods Word within thy heart, that thou mayest not sin against him (*c*); refrain thy feet from every evill way, that thou mayest keep his Word (*d*), when a mans wayes please the Lord, He maketh even his enemyes to be at peace with him (*e*); He, that hath the hearts of all men in his own hands, be they in never so great places, or have they never so great spirits; He, in whose only power it is to turn all hearts which way he will, who is not only a searcher of hearts

[*c*] Psal. 119. 11.
[*d*] Psal. 119. 101.
[*e*] Prov. 16. 7.

hearts, but a worker, and changer of them, as seemeth best to his godly wisedom; He will not only make his friends to be more faithfull unto him, but even his enemies to be at peace with him, if their favour and friendship be expedient for him; He will be sure either to remoove his enemies malice, or restrain their mischief, either to make them not willing, or not able to hurt him.

39.

BE not to be carryed away with every little puff of vain perswasion; be not to be bandyed by the racket of other mens tongues into what Hazard they please; be not so unskilfull and unstable, as lightly to believe every thing that is idlely or cunningly told thee, or unadvisedly to yield to every thing imposed upon thee; but use thy best skill, and pains, in hearing more, inquiring further, searching, and trying, before thou give any credit, or assent to it, yea though a multitude joyn in perswading thee (f); How common

[f] *Non ratium multitudinis acquiescamus judicio*; Hieron. comment. in Isaiah cap. 3.

common is it in these dayes to spread the nets of humility, and weave them with the knots of subtilty, till men have effected their policy, and then they bewray their hypocrisy; be not so subtil as to beguile others, not so simple as to be beguiled by others; be not taken at the first sight, and offer, with never so fair words or shewes, though they seem to bring an honest meaning along with them; be circumspect for thy safety, as well as sincere for thy innocency; loath the venom and poyson of the Serpent, but learn his wisdom; follow the harmelesnes of the Dove, but flie her simplicity.

40.

SOme carry themselves sincerely, but not wisely, some order themselves wisely, but not sincerely; but approove thy self, as far as thou art able, both before God and men; before God, in bearing thy self sincerely, before men, demeaning thy self wisely; perhaps, for all thy warinesse, some may be offended with thee,

thee, which by thee are not offended; but ſuch offences being not given of thee, but taken of them, are not thy faults, but their follies; woe indeed to that man by whom offences come; that is, come juſtly; but an offence, fondly taken, not juſtly given, intangleth no man beſides the taker.

41.

IN this ſubtill vizard age, in theſe times every day more and more degenerating from the former goodneſs, truth, and honeſt plainneſs; In theſe dangerous and diſſolute intercourſes, wherein faithfull friends are for the moſt part gon to God, and their return is not to be expected; wherein we live amongſt ſo many ſerpentine and ſubtill, ſo many malicious and miſchievous men, with whom we may unawares be compelled to traffique, be conſcionable, but circumſpect, keep not only lawfull, but wiſe demeanours; God requireth wiſdom but ſimple, and ſimplicity but wiſedom; If thou have waxineſs mingled with

true

true sincerity, having thy spirit without guile, and thy actions without dissimulation; It is both lawfull and expedient to set wisdom against wisdom, and policy against policy, and care against care, and understanding against understanding, that so by the enemies subtilty, and thy simplicity, thou be not surprized in the cunning traps, and crafty wiles which are laid for thee.

42.

LAbour to have peace always with God, and, (if it be possible) with men, to the great glory of thy Heavenly Father, the profitable example of all beholders, and the abundant comfort of thy own heart; yea though it cost thee some temporall profit, as meek *Abraham* with worldly loss procured it betwixt his Nephew *Lot* and himself (*g*); learn and labour to cut off all occasions of contention even from those that seek occasions; but with the World, Flesh, Devill, at no time admit either peace or parley; call not Sathan to thy company,

[g] Gen. 13. 11.

company, consult not with flesh and blood; contemn familiarity with the world, lest they suddenly get some advantage and overcome thee; Fight always with all thy courage against all these, clad with the whole armour of God, and do thy best to vanquish them; yea this warr is no warr to the peace thou oughtest to keep, but that peace is preserved by this warr, and the more painfully thou thus warrest, the more peacefully thou still walkest.

43.

CAre not, and yet care for to morrow; care not out of distrustfulness, but care out of duty; care not as relying upon the means, without Gods blessing (which is an humor that cannot dwell in Gods Children) but care as trusting to Gods favour upon thy indeavour; labouring both under a tender and heavenly Father, whose blessing no Counsell can hinder, no curse can take away; too little care is want of grace, too much care is want of faith

faith; too little care is presumption, too much care is desperation.

44.

EXclude not God at any time resting on thy self and second causes, neither cast all upon God neglecting the means; either in temporall things for the saving of thy body, or in spirituall things for the salvation of thy soul; Almighty God hath from everlasting ordained both the ends and the means, not the ends without the means, nor the means without the ends, but both of them; All lawfull means may well stand with Gods providence and faith therein; yea by not divorcing the means from the end we both declare our sincere obedience in using such weak means as are subordinate thereunto, and decline security, and presumption, two main enemies of our most holy faith.

45.

45.

BY daily prayer and practice ſtir up the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt in thee, leſt in the end, thou loſe thy ſtore, with ſtock and all; conſtantly keep on rowing againſt the ſtream of thy naturall corruption; againſt which if thou do not ſtrive continually, but ſtand at a ſtay, it will carry thee away and all thy merchandize, as a boat ſtanding looſe upon the river is carryed backward, if it be not waſted forward; is, by the ſway of the water, driven downward, unleſs it be ſtil labouring to go upwards.

46.

OBſerve diligently what adverſaries be abroad, and warily watch that there be no traitours at home: All that hurt thee are not without thee, there are enemies too within thee; and ſuch as may do thee more harm than all the reſt: look upon thy outward ſenſes, and reflect upon

on

on thy inward affections, leſt by the former evills enter, and leſt by the later evills conquer.

47.

TAke heed to thy mouth that thou ſpeak not unadvisedly; and to thy hands that they act not unpreparedly; but eſpecially and above all things look to the inward affections of thy heart; for as the fountain is, ſuch is the river that runneth from it; If the fountain be ſweet, the river that floweth from it will not be ſowre; as the Wood is, ſo the Fire will be, unſavoury wood will make unwholſome fire, but pure Frankincenſe or dry Juniper will yield a pleaſant perfume: ſo if the ſoul be ſanctified, the lips will be ſeaſoned, but if the thoughts and affections be ungodly, they will bring forth lewd words and wicked actions; *for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*, ſaid the God of Truth who knew the heart (*b*), what the heart readeth the mouth repeateth.

[b] Matth. 12. 34.

48.

CONsider thy proper and perſonall ſins, whereunto, by the corruption of thy nature, thou art moſt inclined; from which thou can'ſt hardlieſt abſtain, as beeing more ſtrong, and more working in thee than ſome others are; and againſt them make thy ſpirituall compacts and barricadoes moſt durable, and moſt guard thy walls with Redoubts and outworks; where the hedge is loweſt, every beaſt will ſeek to enter, and where we are weakeſt, Sathan that beaſt will be ſtrongeſt, his temptations will be thickeſt, where our defence is ſlendereſt.

49.

STand to thy watch, looke to thy wayes, keep a continuall guard over thy ſelf, in all occurrences; and not only beware of perſonall ſins, towards which thy nature moſt bends, but of thoſe alſo which are incident to thy preſent eſtate, whatſoever it is. In wealth beware of

high-mindedness, in health of wantonness, in mirth of forgetfulnes, in want to distrustfulnes, in loss of pensiveness, and in death of fearfulness.

50.

ABstain, as far as thou canst, not only from every sin, but also from every baite that may be a means to bring thee unto it; Look not thou upon the wine, saith the Holy Ghost by the mouth of *Salomon*, when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it mooveth it self aright (*i*); and accordingly look not upon the meat, that may betray thy appetite, and then thy affections; young *Daniel* refused the meat that was allotted unto him by *Nebuchadnezzar*, (which of it self was lawfull to be received with thanksgiving) because the King should not entice him thereby to forsake his own God, or to leane to the others Religion (*k*).

[*i*] Prov. 23. 31.

[*k*] Dan. 1. 8.

51.

51.

CHeck not Gods Word with the licentious *Antinomian*, give not Gods Spirit the lie, who in every place warneth us, that the Morall Law is not abolished by the Law of faith, but established (*l*); In the uprightness & integrity of thy heart, endeavour to walk still in the old way of Gods Commandements, if ever thou mean to come to Heaven by the new and living way Christ Jesus; For every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure (*m*); Examin and proove thou still, and fashion thy works by the Law, as by a right levell, which God hath left to be a rule of righteousnes, to remain in full strength, power and vertue for ever. Although thou canst not fulfill it, yet put it not out of thy sight, or care; stray from it as little as thou canst, though thou canst not obey it so fully as thou wouldst.

[*l*] Matth. 5. 17, 18, 19, 20. Rom. 3. 31. James 2. 1.

[*m*] 1 Joh. 3. 3.

52.

HOwsoever thou fall through infirmity, or human frailty, into sin, (as who is free from falling. It is not possible for any meer man to be without all offence) (n) Howsoever being surprized by Sathan, inveigled by slights, inticed by sinners, thou be taken, and upon a sudden overtaken in a fault (for it were a proud perswasion above mans state, and against Gods Truth, to think thy self safe from sin) yet be not so insolent and impudent, stand not in justification of it; for that sheweth less grace and more corruption; while men (though otherwise badly disposed) blush and are touched with some bashfulness, though they cannot contain themselves, yet there is hope of them; some signe of salvation is the acknowledgment of sin (o); but when they justify their bad doings, and boldly defend what they have done, they are almost desperate, and give small hope of amendment, without speciall grace

[n] ... Chrysostom.

[o] Signum salutis agnitio peccati. Bern.

To

To ſin is human weakneſs, but to plead for it wilfull wickednes; Defence of a fault doubles it, and is a forerunner of obduration; Thy ſin perhaps was ſmall as thou didſt commit it, but ſurely 'twill be great if thou ſtrive to maintain it, for that cuts off all repentance, Nay it makes thy ſin grow up into a wicked height of ſcandall, and ſo it may be not only a ſnare to thy ſelfe, but an unhappy ſeducement to others, warranting many more to be ſinfull.

53.

THere are many things evill in themſelves, of which thou mayeſt ſpeak without any evill; as of ſtealing, killing, which are wicked to be practized, not wicked to be publiſhed; but there are other things lawfull to be done, which are *non dicendas*, unlawfull and unhoneſt to be plainly ſpoken of; and therefore forbear (unleſs it be upon good cauſe and with great modeſtie) ſo much as to mention them; Let no corrupt communication proceed out

of thy mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying; that it may minister grace unto the hearers; grieve not the Holy Spirit of God (p), Neither give him occasion, touching his comfortable and defensive presence to depart from thee.

[p] Ephes. 4. 29, 30.

54.

LEt not thy heart be in thy mouth, but thy mouth in thy heart, unless it be to glorify God, or edifie thy brethren; or for justice and equitie in behalf of them that are thrust down, and injuriously dealt with by some unconscionable oppressour; unless it be to speak such things as are just and acceptable in the sight of God, and good and profitable for the use of the hearers; unless thy speech be gracious and powdered with salt (q), that is holy and wholesom for the matter, and discreet and seasonable for the manner; Either vent good matters, or break not good manners, Either speak that which is better than silence, or els keep silence still (r); we commonly make little reckning of vain

[q] Coloss. 4. 6.

[r] ἢ λέγε τὰ κρείττον σιγοῦς ἢ σιγὴν ὀχ. Eurip.

vain words, but even the least vain word is not the least sin, of which one day we must give a great account. [a] Luke 12. 36.

55.

Suspect all thy doings; like *Job* that holy man, that feared all his wayes (*s*), yea though he had much lesse cause to fear, than we have, who come far short of his carefulness; Suspect either thy negligence in them, or pride of them, or some corrupt affection mingled with them; And when thou hast done the uttermost thou canst, when thou hast bent all thy strength to serve the Lord in speciall manner, say not thou art righteous, like the Pharisee that condemned another, and justified himself; Be so farr from setting up thy rest, or crest upon it, that thou condemn thy self for an unprofitable servant (*t*); desiring remission, not deserving reward; As Christ said to the young man that was so forward in the Gospell, that seemed zealous in the wayes of God, and even to make haste to the Kingdom of Hea-

[s] Job 9. 28.

[t] Luke 17. 10.

ven,

[a] Luke 18. 22. ven, yet one thing is wanting (a), so still cry out to thy soul; either for the matter, or for the manner, some thing is wanting; Assure thy self, there is some want of holiness, nay, some unholiness in thy holiest actions.

56.

BE not Eagle-eyed, and sharp-sighted, to observe the behaviour, and look into the lives of other men, so long as being overcome with self-love, thou art pur-blind in regarding, and backward in reforming thine own; but first begin with thy self, and end with others; but first look to thy own wayes, and without partiality consider how hard it is to subdue the strength of sin in thy self, and to over-master thy own corruptions, so shall thou be more charitable, and less severe to others.

57.

MAke conscience of the least sin, that thou mayest be affraid of the greatest, strain at every such gnat,

gnat, and thou shalt not easily swallow a Camel; use to pul out but such a moat in thine ey, and thou shalt not soon suffer a beame to stick in it; to prevent sin at the beginning, the labour is little, but to shake off a custom is the work of a *Samson*.

58.

MAke not thy self guilty of other mens sins, by counsell, or commandment, or consent, by commending, or justifying, or concealing, or not opposing, if thou be able; For though thou do not execute it in the work, and apparently practise it with the hand, yet, if thou prevent it not, when it is in thy power so to do, thou commest within the compass of the sin, in Gods account; If God have made thee strong, and thou make thy self weak, the evill that thou suffereſt shall be required of thee.

59.

LEt not the fatness of anothers portion trouble thee, nor yet the

the leaneſs of thine own; Never envy that another hath more, nor yet repine and grudge that thou haſt leſs; Make not ſlight of that which thou enjoyeſt, becauſe thou wanteſt ſomething that thou deſireſt; It is not Gods Ordinance that al ſhould be alike, or that al ſhould be aloft, or that all ſhould abound in riches; As the Lord can give riches without contentment, ſo he can give contentment without riches. Be not ſick for anothers wealth, or anothers office, or anothers honour, but conſtantly and equally content thy ſelf, with that honour, or office, or wealth, or mean eſtate, that God hath given thee; but ſatisfie thy ſelf with that low or laſt place wherin he hath ſetled thee, and acknowledge that the meaneſt place is far more than either thou canſt chalenge, or canſt deſerve; I am not worthy of the leaſt of all thy mercyes, ſaith *Jacob* (*w*); Not worthy of the greateſt, No, not of the leaſt; the leaſt drop of thy mercies is greater than all my deſerts.

[*w*] Gen. 32, 10.

60.

60.

WHat though ſome, far unlike to juſt *Lot* (*x*), are nothing troubled in their ſouls with the filthy converſation of the wicked? Nay, which is worſe, what though ſome can delight and ſport themſelves, can laugh and clap their hands, to behold men laden with drink tumble like ſwine, or obſerve how they rail upon the truth, and thoſe that profeſs it, beſides many other ungracious ſpeeches; little imagining that by ſuch applauding behaviour they ſeem alſo to rejoyce in the Devills conqueſt over their brethren; yet mourn thou for the ſins of others as if they were thine own, for if thou do not thou wilt thereby make them thine own; If thou mourn for them, they are theirs not thine, but, if thou do not mourn, they are both theirs and thine; they are ſmitten in *Ezechiel* that mourned not for the abhominations committed, as well as they that did commit them (*y*).

[*x*] 2 Pet. 2. 7.

[*y*] Ezech. 9. 5.

61.

61.

WHat intollerable oppression soever the malice of men shall not cease to multiply upon thee, let Christian wisdom and magnanimity subdue thy passions; Be so far from revenging thy self indeed for injuries done unto thee, as not in big words or bold assertions to threaten, or in the secret corners of thy mind to purpose any vengeance; commend thy cause to God, stay his leisure till he deliver thee; or, if thou live where God hath appointed a governour, appeal to his Vicegerent, the publick Magistrate, who beareth not the sword in vain, and abide his determination; rather undergo a second injury, than with thy own revenging hand requite the first; rather with a good heart be ready to bear any thing, than by any thing, whereof thou hast no warrant, seek satisfaction; Art thou a Christian and wilt be revenged? Tarry a while, thy Lord and Master Christ Jesus is not yet revenged of his own death;

(z) put away all rage, put on the Lord Jesus Christ (a); pray, as thy blessed Saviour both did, and taught, that thy enemies may rather be pardoned, than punished.

[z] *Vindicari vis Christiane? Nondum vindicatus est Christus* August. in Psal. 30.

[a] Rom. 13. 14.

62.

NEither bite thy neighbour present, nor backbite him absent; Neither bite him nor backbite him with what thou knowest, and much less with more than thou knowest; Moove not any tale, whether false or true, whereby the credit of thy neighbour may be lost, or lessened; All truths are not to be told at all times; Thou mayst bear false witness when thou makest a true report, false witnesses do not alwayes deliver untruths, but deck their fowl intents with a fair shew of verity; the truth of the matter excuseth not the guilt of the slander (b).

[b] *Veritas convitii non excusat convitium.*

63.

BE not careless of thy companions carriage, but exhort and edify him, as far as thou mayest, lest the man perish that is a friend, and the Devill

till rejoice at it that is an enemy; Be frequent in admonishing thy friend, and sometimes spare not sharply to check him, never rebuke him bitterly, never reject him utterly.

64.

LIe not for thy friend, or for thy self, or for Almighty God; God requireth me to love him, but not to lie for him; will you speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him? saith *Job* (c), checking in his friends a false speech, although it tended to defend the Lord; speak not at any time that which thou knowest to be false, nor at all times that which thou knowest to be true; conceal as farr as lawfully thou mayest, that which may do hurt spoken; Thou art not ever bound to tell all the truth, but thou art ever bound that all be truth thou tellest; It is not a ly when silence keepeth back something that is true, but when speech utters something that is false.

[c] Job 13. 7.

65.

65.

SEll not one sin to buy another, amend not one errour or corruption by another, but purge out the old leaven that thou mayst be a new lump (*d*), Forsake not riotousness, to imbrace covetousness, Neither leave secret repining, to fall into open rebellion; In avoiding superstition, become not either schismaticall, or prophane; Neither in abhorring prophaneness fall into meere formality and hypocrisy; To abandon Epicurisme, admire not Stoicisme, Neither run into Anarchy, to shun Tyrannie; but seek, and turn to, and keep the golden mean, prescribed by the Lord in his Word; From the which the wider thou walkest, the worser thou wandrest, and the further off from thy journeys end.

[*d*] 1 Cor. 5. 7.

66.

ABE fervent and zealous, but not fierce and violent; Be diligent for the increase of thy wealth, but not

not a slave to the world; Be neither remisse in thy vocation, nor yet too severe a taskmaster over thy self to the oppressing of thy mind, or body; soon changeable is thy life with rest, and recreation; but without recreation or rest it cannot be long durable.

67.

ABhor hast, and love leisure, when thou art to undertake any serious business, lest, if thou go on with little heed, thou come off with less honour; Many circumstances belong to things of substance; Matters of moment are not to be managed but with much deliberation; It is safer and easier in such cases, to practise when thou hast pondered, than to ponder when thou hast practised.

68.

APproximate none to thy secrets, neither willingly make choice of any to serve thee in any office, though of never so serviceable qualities or usefull indowments otherwise,

wiſe; but ſuch as are careful to ſerve God, according to their apprehenſion and ability; but ſuch as are religious and vertuous, and adorned with true worthyneſs; but ſuch as are more willing, at leaſt, to heavenly cauſes, than quick in worldly matters; He, who hath freely ſanctified their hearts with grace, will ſurely direct their ways with judgment; They will not faulter in their buſineſs, nor will God fail in his bleſſing; They will be faithfull and prudent in the managing, and God will be gracious and merciful in the proſpering of all thoſe imployments which they take in hand.

69.

HOwſoever thou art before others in prerogative of birth and blood, and in many other things there be a great difference between thee and thy neighbour; Howſoever God hath inveſted thee with right unto titles, and revenews; and in worldly matters perhaps too hath nothing, whereas thou haſt all things

and wanteſt nothing; yet in the maineſt matters and things of moſt worth, acknowledge him and account him thy equal. The loweſt have as good a title to ſalvation, and the Kingdom of Heaven; as the higheſt, and the pooreſt as the richeſt; There is neither Jew, nor Greek; There is neither bound nor free; There is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Chriſt Jeſus (e). It is not the meaning of Gods mercy to countermand any civil reſpects; In the world there muſt be differences, and degrees; it muſt be ſo for policy and order; but in Chriſt Jeſus all are one; All have one Redeemer; All are members of one body, Chriſt hath redeemed all of all ſorts that believe in him.

(e) Gal. 3. 28. *quantum ad fidei Statum & dignitatem.* Diony. Carth. *in locum. quantum ad juſtificationem attinet.* Nicolaus Hemingius *in locum.*

(70)

THere is an excellent wiſedom beyond the rules of Phyſick, beyond all ſoveraign medicines whatſoever, in the weakneſs of our bodyes for their reſtauration, and in the good eſtate of our bodyes

for

for the continuation and ſtrengthning of life; to ſend to heaven by prayer for the increaſe of faith, and fear of God, and that increaſe will make the heart better, and that betterneſs will procure more true cheerfulneſs, and that cheerfulneſs will ſtir up more ſound health, comforting natural heat, and diſperſing it all over the body; and that health will multiply our dayes, and augment the years of our life; whereas raging, hopeleſs, heartleſs ſorrow, like a devouring Harpye conſumes our blood and ſpirits, drieth our bones, and ſuddenly diſſolves and deſtroyes us.

71.

SEeſt thou a man ſmitten with diſeaſes, and lying in extremity and anguiſh; his heart panting, his ſtrength failing, his fleſh and bones tormentings; and, which is yet more lamentable, doſt thou perceive that Satham (as he commonly uſeth upon ſuch occaſions,) endeavoureth now eſpecially to breed no ſmall

troubles and terrours in his soul? send up thankfull thoughts unto thy most gracious Lord God, for holding his hands, and not laying the like upon thee, for not dealing with thee severely as he might justly: God is alwayes to be glorified of us both in our bodyes and in our souls; not only for his proceeding to profit us, but also for his forbearing to punish us.

72.

AS it is a great fault not to put up a small wrong; So it may be no small fault to suffer a great injurie; thou art bound in such a case not to make thy self a prey, but to make thy cause known, not to whet on others to lay on load upon thee, but (as Gods servants have done from time to time) to crave and call for the help of the Magistrate, and seek remedy from his hands, whom God hath left as his Lieutenant, and set to supply his place, either for the preventing of further wrong, or for the punishment of the doer of wrong; God bindeth our hands from unjust

revenge,

revenge, but he ſhutteth not our mouths from juſt complaint; God is offended as ſure when lawfull means are not uſed, as when unlawfull means are practiſed.

73.

NOt only labour to ſerve God thy ſelf, but ſtir up, and inflame others to ſerve him, to believe his truth, and walk in his Commandments; Him will God love moſt, who ſhall winne moſt to the love of God (*f*): wherefore hath God given thee light, but that thou ſhouldſt give light to others? How canſt thou be ſure of thy own calling, if thou haſt no delight to call others? Thou art not turned to God thy ſelf, if thou bear not that heart, that thou wouldſt even think thy ſelf happy, mighteſt thou be a means to turn another unto God. The Prophet *Iſaiah*, that Evangelical Prophet, and Prophetical Evangeliſt, prophecying of the Kingdom of Chriſt, bringeth in the people ſo full of zeal, that they ſtir up one

(f) *Is in amore Dei major erit, qui plurimos ad ejus amorem trahit. Greg. in hom.*

another, saying, *Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in in his paths* (g). And *Zachariah* saith, *They that dwell in one City, shall go to another*, saying, *Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts* (h).

(g) Isaiah 2. 3.

(h) Zachar. 8. 21.

74.

BE not wise to thy self; Be not a niggard of thy knowledge, but communicate thy knowledge to others; Cover not thy candle with a vessel, neither put it under a bed, but set it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light (i); So shalt thou perform the intent of thy stewardship; so shalt thou be of the number of those, who profiting teach, and by teaching profit; knowledge may fitly be resembled to the Widows oyl, which, the more it was powred out, the more it increased; knowledge may be well likened to the five loaves, which the more they

(i) Luke 8. 16.

were

were distributed the more they multiplyed; As contrariwise, if knowledge be not imparted, it will be impaired, If we keep it private, we shall be deprived of it.

75.

ART thou learned, and able to teach others? yet disdain not that any should teach thee; what mortal meer man ever attained to that depth of judgment as not to be yet ignorant in many profitable concernments? Even in the same profession that may be hidden from one, which is known to another; to attend is no hinderance but that a man may speak, to speak is no hinderance but that a man may hear; therefore *Job* matcheth them together, saying, Let a man of understanding tell me, there is he prepared to learn, let a wise man harken to me (*k*), there is he provided to speak; speaking and hearing amongst all that are wise-hearted cannot be prejudicial one to another.

(*k*) Job 34. 34.

76.

76.

ATtend as often, and as carefully, as thou mayest, to all wholesome and convenient directions; Be more desirous to harken to others, than to hear thy self; but especially when thou meetest with such, as excell in knowledge, as are filled with the knowledge of Gods will in all wisedom and spiritual understanding; by whom in many things thou mayest exactly cure thy ignorance by learning in silence; who are as profitable Well-springs plentifull and perpetual; such as fail not, nor can be drawn dry at any time; whose hearts feed their mouths, and thereout excellent observations in one usefull respect or other, readily flow, as a free stream from a full fountain.

77.

COntemn not, neither lightly pass over such things as thou seest; but seriously search and seek, not only what temporal, but especially

what

what ſpiritual uſe thou canſt draw from them, that may enrich thy ſoul, and help to build thee up in Chriſt Jeſus; learn with the Bee, to gather celeſtial honey, as well from the weed, as from the flower; learn by the Duſt thy baſeneſs, by the Graſs thy frailty, by the Ant diligence, by the Sheep patience, by the Oxe thankfulneſs, by the Clouds bountifulnes; learn by the Darknes the time of thy ignorance, by the Light the time of the Goſpel, by every thing ſomething that may wean thee from earth, and win thee to Heaven.

78.

COmmune often with thy own heart, and let thy ſpirit make diligent ſearch wherein thou haſt offended, in thought, word, deed, by ſins of omiſſion or commiſſion; againſt God, thy neighbour, and thy ſelf; ſtand not in thine own light, be not partial, but examin thy ſelf earneſtly, thoroughly, uprightly; Neither only examin, but upon examination condemn thy ſelf, fall at

Gods

Gods feet, and humbly cry for mercy; Thus if thou judge thy self before thy self in this thy day, thou shalt not be condemned in the last day, before the Judgment Seat of Christ, in the presence and audience of all the world.

79.

DIscover to thy Surgeon thy sores, to thy Physician thy disease, to Almighty God thy sins; It is a good disgrace, that procureth grace; He preventeth his cure that doth not publish his cause (*l*). The Lord indeed knoweth all things, but yet requireth thy confession; is acquainted with all thy wishes, and all the volutations of thy mind, but nevertheless expecteth thy words (*m*).

(l) *Ipse sibi denegat curam qui suam medicum non publicat causam.* Aug. *epist.* 188.

(m) *Novit Deus omnia vocem tamen tuam expectat.* Ambros. *de panit. l.* 1. *cap.* 23.

80.

THink not thy self immediately made clean from all thy iniquity, transgression, and sin, if thou shed a few tears and bewail them;

them; but be ſorrowful for them; and ſorrowful that thou canſt be no more ſorrowful; conſidering that if a river were turned into tears flowing from thine eyes, thou couldſt never ſufficiently be grieved for thy offences; if God ſhould in his Juſtice only require it; and yet diſpair not, but take a true and comfortable, and faſt hold upon God by a lively faith; who is gracious and abundant in mercy; whoſe mercy hath neither bottom nor meaſure; who will not the death of a ſinner, but rather that he ſhould repent and live; diſliking himſelf for his manifold miſdemeanors, and cleaving to God for his manifold mercyes.

81.

BE not ſo caſt down in the ſight of thy own unworthyneſs, as to think, becauſe thou deſerveſt not Gods mercy, therefore thou ſhalt never be partaker of it; For how plentiful are his gracious promiſes every where of favour and compaſſion? the which though there be no cauſe

in thee why he ſhould confirm, yet is there cauſe enough in himſelf why he ſhould perform; who, whatſoever he will, he can, and, whatſoever he hath promiſed, he will, who alwayes uſeth to be as good as his word, who is infinite in his mercy, and infallible in his truth.

82.

IF thou wouldſt repent truly and thoroughly, pray earneſtly to the Lord, that it would pleaſe him of his infinite compaſſion, to look upon thee with the eyes of his grace; The moſt merciful God is the only giver of repentance unto life (*n*); It is not in mans power to repent when he will, but when God will; It is not thy own, or any others indeavour, that can do any thing in this way, till God put to his help; untill Chriſt did look back upon *Peter*, with his Spirit, as well as with his eye, thereby to work upon his conſcience, He was not moved He was not touched with compunction, He had no heart at all to go out, nor will

(m) Act. 11. 18.

will to mourn and weep bitterly for his ſins.

83.

SEeſt thou thy neighbour drawn into a dangerous ſin? draw not out thy ſtilletto of final condemnation upon him; look not upon him without hope; deprave not his former graciouſneſs, as though it had never been real, nor conclude his future reprobation, as though he could never be righteous; what knoweſt thou, but that he that is fallen, may riſe again? as a member that is out of joint may be ſet in again; And what knoweſt thou, but that the ſame, which is to day his ſin, may be to morrow thy wickedneſs? reprove him and admoniſh him thou mayeſt and muſt, according to thy office and opportunity; So thou begin and proceed with a charitable conſtruction, and Chriſtian compaſſion; but to aggravate and amplify ſlips, or falls, as worldlings uſe to do, and to ſentence offendours to the pit of hell, that is a

power

power for the potter, not for the clay (*o*); Thou hast no part nor fellowship in that authority.

(o) *Non est judicium luti sed figuli.* Aug. *de correp. & grat. cap. 5.*

84.

BEholdest thou any slain together in the field? or drowned together in the Sea? or any way else come to the same destruction together? yet conclude them not equally vertuous, or vicious, or their rewards after death, alike happy or miserable: For their lives may be contrary though their deaths be the same; or though they agree a long time in their race, yet may they differ before their races end; The two malefactours that suffered with our Saviour, on the Crosse, had the like external punishment, but not the like eternal condemnation; in their death they were not divided, they both dyed a violent death; but in their souls they were plainly parted, the one went to heaven, the other to hell.

85.

85.

JUdge not any man by his diſtemperature in his ſickneſs, but by his diſpoſition in his health; or by the ſtrangeneſs of his death, but by the ſtrictneſs of his life; whereof the conſtant courſe is the beſt rule whereby to conjecture his future eſtate; unleſs thou wilt be judged thy ſelf to be full of malice and empty of charity. They are uſual miſchiefs and not extravagant miſdemeanours; (No not raving and blaſpheming in caſe of violent diſeaſe diſturbing the head and brain) that can make any probable argument, or likely ſigne of a ſon of perdition.

86.

ABhor that peremptory cenſure, that this man is a Saint, and that man is a ſinner, he the ſervant of God, and he the child of the Devill; For who is able, without ſpecial revelation, to ſay determinately and aſſuredly, touching another, that

that he is the child of the Devill, or that he is the Child of God? cannot grace easily cut off the oldest and strongest entail of wickedness? Are there not many Wolves within the very Church, whose hypocrisy the Lord will in time discover? and are there not many sheep without the sheepfold of Christ, which God in his time will call (*p*)? What man is there, of so weak a faith, or so wicked a life, but that one day Christ out of his infinite goodness may call him and heal him? How far was *Paul* out of the way, and in what wrong and violent course in his former years? He breathed out threatnings and slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord (*q*), he was a blasphemour and an oppressour (*r*). But was he so alwayes? Did not God reduce him, and reform him in his later years? whilst he was striking, was he not stricken into his conversion? and of a ravenous and most cruell wolfe was he not made first a mild sheep, and then a most diligent and excellent shepheard? And where is he that dare

(p) *August. hom.* 45. upon *John.*

(q) Acts 9. 1.

(r) 1 Tim. 1. 13.

dare take upon him ſo to judge of another mans future eſtate, as to ſay certainly that he is damned, or he is ſaved? Is it not more than he hath any warrant for? Who art thou that ſo judgeſt anothers ſervant? Is it not to his own maſter only, who perfectly knows him, to whom he ſtands, or falls, and not to thee who art not able to know his heart? Is not his own maſter only that one Law-giver who is able to ſave and to deſtroy (*s*)? Who art thou that takeſt ſuch authority, and ſeverity upon thee? that dealeſt ſo unmercifully with thy brother? He is a ſinner, and ſo art thou a ſinner, ſo either thou art, or haſt been, or mayeſt be; Judge thy ſelf, try and examin thy own works, ſearch and ſift them; Judge thy ſelf, and judge not him, leſt thou be condemned of the Lord, for not judging and judging.

(*s*) James 4. 12.

87.

BEfore thou receive the holy Sacrament, whoſe price is unvalu-

able and the vertue no less than the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ (*t*); To the partaking whereof no man should rashly and rudely thrust himself, or come without religious fear and trembling; lest instead of a seal of Gods mercy, he receive a pledge of his wrath; if thou be not fit for such a favour, of so high, and holy a nature, endeavour to make thy self fit, and the way to make thy self fit, is examination of thy self in what case thou standest; Examin thy repentance whether it be sincere, thy purpose whether it be stedfast, thy faith whether it be lively, thy thankfulness whether it be real, and thy charity whether it be generall,

(*t*) 1 Cor. 10. 16.

88.

BE frequent and forward in coming to the holy Sacrament, a visible pledge of God's grace, and holy covenant with thee; a Seal to assure thee of the performance of the gracious promises made to thee in the Word; a part of the most delicate

and delightful ſouls food, that ever was taſted, or that can be in the world; Deprive not thy ſelf of ſo excellent a help both to provoke obedience, and to ſtrengthen faith, and to increaſe the comfort of the inward man; Make preparation, but make not excuſe; Thou wouldſt think thy ſelf wrong'd, if having furniſhed thy table and provided liberally for thy gueſts, any one of them frowardly ſhould reject thy kindneſs; what a wrong is it then to refuſe the table and feaſt of Almighty God? It is no leſs danger to abſtaine from the Lords Supper wilfully, than it is to receive it unworthily. } Mark this

89.

WHat though Gods gifts be ſure without ſealing, as he himſelf is ſure without changing? what though the Sacraments of themſelves cannot confer grace *ex opere operato*, by the work wrought, that is, by force and vertue of the work and Word done and ſaid in the Sacrament, as the Papiſts affirm (*u*), (*u*) Conc. Trident. Seſſ. 6. cap. 8. Rhem. Acts 22. Sec. 1. Ro. 6. Sect. 5.

blasphemously giving that power to the creature, which belongeth only to the Creator? yet are they instruments of Gods mercies, which he useth of his goodnes towards us, to convey to our feebleness good things; and to make us more secure of his love; They are the King of Kings gracious pardon to confirm the weakness of our faith, to make good the truth of his own promises, to seal up unto us forgiveness of sins; Being then by Gods institution very available, frequent them with a feeling of thy wants, with a reverence of his ordinances, with hungring after his graces, with calling upon his Name, to fit thee and prepare thee for that heavenly work.

90.

Deceive not thy own heart with a Zodiack of false signes; Rest not thy self in seeking after common gifts, general knowledge and illumination, diversity of tongues, and interpretation of tongues, all which are common to all sorts of men both good

good and bad, but labour and covet to be partaker of ſuch gifts as are peculiar and proper to the elect, & do always accompany ſalvation, and eternal life; but labour to feel a certain knowledge of thy reconciliation to God in Chriſt, the gifts of regeneration, a dying unto ſin, and riſing up to newneſs of life, the grace of hearty prayer, meekneſs in bearing rebukes, delight in thoſe that excel in vertue, comfort in diſtreſſes, and ſuch like, which the elect of God find in ſome meaſure wrought in them; If theſe be in thee and abound, thou ſhalt have that peace of conſcience through them, that paſſeth all underſtanding; but if theſe be not in thee, whatſoever knowledge thou haſt beſides, though thou haſt taſted of the heavenly gift, been inlightned by the Spirit, been partaker of the holy Ghoſt, taſted of the good word of God, and received the Goſpel with joy, thou ſhalt find no more ſound comfort in them, than many moſt wicked men have had, who were enlightned by God, but ſhall never be ſaved; who

attained to great and high knowledge, but never grew so high as faith.

91.

ACcording to the truth of the Word in mercy revealed unto thee, grow in grace more and more, and make every day some progress to the Kingdom of heaven; still press, and indeavour onwards to obtain it; Thou shalt find many lets and hinderances in the way, which to pass over may seem to be hard in the beginning (especially if they be looked upon with an eye of flesh;) but a setled course and continuall practice of faith and repentance will within a while make all that was laborious, lightsome, the matter easy and evident, and the way plain and comfortable. A scorner seeketh wisedome and findeth it not; but knowledge is easy to him that understandeth (*w*); that understandeth to desire it, and humbleth himself.

(*w*) Prov. 14. 6.

92.

THink not thy self discharged either by Gods soveraigne, or by the Priests subordinat working; but that thou must also put to thy help, and work out, not the price, but the assurance of thy own salvation (x); but that thou must also by using the appointed means, by walking in all the Commandments of God without reproof, and continuall increasing in sanctification (which is a signe and seal of our justification) procure to thy self an assurance of thy election (y); but that thou must also by fighting the good fight, and keeping the faith, put thy self into an expectation of the Crown of righteousnes (z); If thou wouldst be sure to have salvation follow, then must holy and carefull serving of God go before.

(x) Philip. 2. 12.

(y) 2 Pet. 1. 10.

(z) 2 Tim. 4. 8.

93.

HAst thou but little abilities, and few gifts, either of nature, art, or grace

grace bestowed upon thee? beholdest thou a double portion in others, and a poor pittance in thy self? yet be not dismay'd, be not out of heart, but in an humble cõtentation & devout thankfulness, proceed according to thy power, and thy labour shall not be in vain in the Lord; God desireth not to reap where he hath not sown, nor requireth he much, but where he hath given much; He looketh not for labouring beyond thy strength, nor travailing further than thy gifts can reach; When *Ezechiah* pray'd for the people, that the Lord would pardon every one that prepared his heart to seek the Lord God of his Fathers, though he were not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary, the Lord heard him, and harkened unto him, and healed the people (*a*).

(*a*) 2 Chro. 30. 18, 19, 20.

94.

COntent not thy self with knowledge and understanding, with utterance and discourse, or with ability to dispute and determine many

ny difficult points of Religion; though theſe faculties be in thee very eminent and ſingular; but conſider what faith thou haſt to believe, and conſcience to perform obedience; but look what power Gods Spirit hath in thee, to ſanctification of life, to amendment of errours and miſdoings: of the Spirit illuminating the fruits are often given to the wicked (*Balaam* and *Saul* may Propheſie, *Caiphas* may have ſome tranſient revelations) but the fruits of the Spirit ſanctifying are vouchſafed to none but onely to Gods Elect; Not he that knoweth moſt, but he, that maketh beſt uſe of what he knoweth, is the man whom God will know, and prefer, in the day of eternal retribution, in the day of his glorious appearance, when he ſhall deſtroy all the wicked, and make happy his own for ever.

95.

THe free-hearted Jews ſtil brought, either gold, or ſilver, or pretious ſtones, or fine linnen, or ſpices, or

ſilk,

silk, or hair, or one thing or other, to the building of the material tabernacle; and they left not building till they were prohibited by proclamation; In building thy spiritual tabernacle to the Lord, leave not praying reading, hearing, learning, meditating, applying, practising, till thou be stayed by death; In thy spiritual progress, repine not at thy pains past, neither think much of that which is to come, but keep on still; Be not weary of good intents and gracious imployments.

96.

Let the examples of thy neighbours dying round about thee daily, thy own decaying in strength and health, the many calamities in this dangerous world, incite thee to apply (whilst thou hast time) both thy body and mind to do good; stir thee up to prepare thy self, both in profession and practise for thy departure; so shall neither life, nor death, no not sudden death, part thee from thy Saviour; so shall death

Mark this.

be

be unto thee, not death indeed, but a bare name, and no worſe; ſo ſhall death not be terrible unto thee, but as welcome, as quiet ſleep to a wearied and over-wearied traveller.

97.

BE not ſo heartleſs as to fear death, nor yet ſo ſenſeleſs, as to pray for death before the time appointed by the Lord thy Governour: It is a ſin to work thy death before men, and it is a ſin to wiſh thy death before God; Indeed death which bringeth the diſſolution of nature, and is a paſſage to a better life, is a welcom gueſt to them that are the Lords; all the godly do make themſelves ready to receive him, to meet and intertain him; Death to the wicked cometh with a ſting, but to the godly hath loſt it; O death where is thy ſting? O Hell where is thy victory (*b*)? Chriſt hath both abated the ſting of the pain, and increaſed the ſtrength of the patient; Joyful and glorious is the happyneſs to be with God; but aſk not thy wages

(*b*) 1 Cor. 15. 55.

wages before thou haſt done thy work; and who can tell when he hath done all that? God may have ſomething more for thee to diſpatch. There may be ſome further office of a good ſervant, deſigned for thy part, to perform amongſt thy fellow ſervants; It is better to live to God, than to be with God. If thou be with God thou ſhalt be glorified, but if thou live to God, God ſhall be glorified; It was the Spirits ſpecial warrant, that made old *Simeon* deſire to depart; If we have not the like warrant, It is a great weakneſs to deſire not to be, rather than to be in miſery; Petition not to dy but to live, and declare the works of the Lord, and labour further in his imployments; Ask not, ſeek not for any means of death, but ſeek and ſue for a bleſſing upon all thoſe good means, that may maintain thy life, to do more good therein to the Church of God.

98.

LEt not any of Gods Judgments either ſeen, or heard, paſs without heedfulneſs, or be obſerved without uſefulneſs; Let his vengeance juſtly fallen upon others, though it do not toucht thee, yet teach thee, and ſtir thee up to amendment of life; God ſmiteth a few to warn many, and ſometimes puniſheth but one, to profit all; what a happyneſs ſhall it be, if, by Gods grace, we ſo conſider others puniſhment, that we our ſelves may never be made examples of puniſhment unto others?

99.

MAke what uſe thou canſt of Gods Judgments upon others, and learn at their charge, and by their ſtripes, to get ſome inſtruction to thy ſelf; Meditate often upon the fearful Judgments of God, which he bringeth upon the world, that they may bring thy heart to a greater dread, and reverence of his holy Majeſty.

Majesty; but especially ponder upon the last judgment in the end of the world, and of thy particular judgment at the hour of death; that so having made thy peace before hand with God, by the mediation of thy blessed Lord and Saviour, thou mayst be sure to escape Gods wrath, and be saved: for if the tree fal towards the South or towards the North, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be (c). As the tree falleth, so it must ly, whether it be to the North of Gods Judgments, or to the South of his mercy; If the tree fall towards the South, (if a man dy in faith) or towards the North (without faith) there it lyeth; As God doth find thee, when he doth call thee, so doth he judge thee.

(c) Eccles. 11. 3.

100.

DAily consider, and daily practise to mind thy eternall life, in this thy temporal life, and have thy conversation in heaven, whil'st thou walkest upon the earth, by using this world as though thou didst not use

use it (e), having another respect in the use of it than for it self; and not only thinking, or talking, or wishing of heaven, not only meditating or discoursing of God, but doing Gods will, as the Angels in heaven, readily, willingly, faithfully, without let, murmur, or deceipt; by seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; by setting thy affections on things above, not on things on the earth (f); whatsoever thou wouldst do at the last gasp, and groan, when thou art dying, do the same every day, whilst thou art living; He that would live when he is dead, must dy when he is alive.

(e) 1 Cor. 7. 31.

(f) Colos. 3. 1, 2.

Proverbs 4. 13.

TAke fast hold of instruction, let her not go: keep her, for she is thy life.

[illegible] Epist. of John vers. 9.

He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, He hath both the Father and the Son.

Cyprianus

Epist. 4.

Humanos errores, & m[illegible] relinquamus & in veri[illegible] maneamus.

Let us leave the errours, and lyes of men, and abide in the truth of God.

FINIS.